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JANUARY 2009

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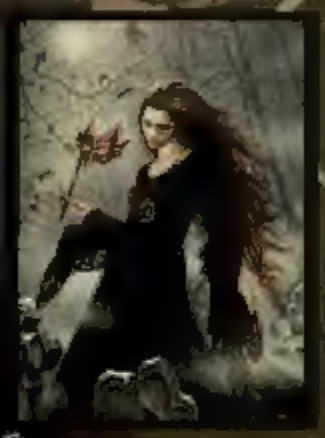

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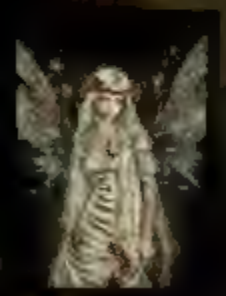

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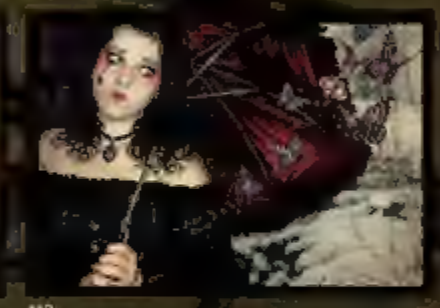

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Hey Guys,

By the time you read this we'll have a new President. Looking forward to that, and although I have made up my own mind some time ago who I'd vote for, I won't share that with you here but have and will be sharing more of these kinds of "political" thoughts with any of the gang hanging out on the message boards between writing this and the election. One of the many reasons I'm bringing it up here, is if you bought this issue off the newsstand you'll notice a slight cover price increase, the first in SEVEN years by the way, which is heartbreaking for us to do—but a sign of the times. Something which we all here hope will get better soon... I'd love to be able to come back to you in a year telling you we're lowering the price.

Okay, let me tell you why this issue is worth the extra cash...

I want to welcome Mr. Kovack back to the front cover. He's getting to be a regular and fan favorite—glad everybody likes his work as much as I do. On the back cover Young Yoon and Director Lee provided a killer front cover quality painting based on the "24 Hour Man" feature story within, but we run into a scheduling conflict! Sorry guys, but I can promise the fans it will be sported on the front cover of the collected.

As mentioned above, "24 Hour Man" (part one) was the main story in our July 2001 issue and finally after many years of hard work, the guys have slam dunked the final installment for this issue. If you want to find out why it took so long, wait till you see one of the future Galleries we'll be running in 2009 on "War of the Worlds: Goliath", the animated film that Joe Pearson and Young have been working on for some time now. Exceptionally cool stuff.

The talent in the three Gallery sections in this issue blows me away! Heavy Metal has always been about the art, and when we added the second gallery, the "Artist Studio" the fans went wild, so when we had the chance to do a third as a special guest series/gallery style feature, we took the plunge! Thanks to Matt Lazzicka (Gallery), Gabriel Ippoliti (Artist Studio), as well as Julie, Boris, and Anthony for the "Tarot Cards" artists feature!

For our usual fantastic array of short stories, Ricci and Simonacci sent along a twisted tale we couldn't resist entitled, "The Meat", while James Ortega spins a yarn of a different [illegible] Ferran Xalabarder sent us "The Kiss" and we fell for it, before selecting the final ditty by Horatio Weisfeld and Rafael Kayanan called, "Slaughter Of The Exterminators!" (Love that title!)

Okay, I'm going to wrap this up by thanking S.C. for his Dossier work as always, but ALSO want to part by saying, I know this has been a super tough year for our country, and all of us in it... I do hope all of you, your families and loved ones are hanging in there, and like all of us here—here's hoping for "real change" in the next four years.

All the best,

Kris Eastman

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear H.M.,
I just wanted to compliment you on the punch to the brain you call "Fluorescent Black". It gave me the intense mind jab that I usually only receive when reading some William Burroughs or watching a David Lynch flick. Those "mind meld" pages were some of the best I've seen for some time. totally looking forward to part two.
Sciostar

Dear Sciostar,
We were more than thrilled to have Matt, Nathan and Inagi team up to produce FB for us—they are hard at work on part two which will be out some time in 2009, as part of our Summer Special. I can't wait either!

Dear H.M.,
So here I am, thinking my favorite artist really should end up in my favorite magazine at some point in the near future. It's late, but I can't sleep, so I decide to crack open one of the still wrapped Heavy Metals in my backlog (been so busy lately that I haven't had the chance to go through them all yet). I happened to pick, at random, the September 2008 issue, and two pages in, I'm hit with a picture I've never seen before, yet I instantly identify the artist as Amano. To top it all off, I'm listening to some music [illegible] game, and the title that introduced me to Amano's work in the first place.
Ahninjas

Dear H.M.,
I was really pleased to see Amano coverage in the September 2008 issue. To see the world-renowned and legendary artist featured in Heavy Metal is just a dream come true.
Kadath

Dear Ahninjas and Kadath,
Looks like we're all on the same page. Heavy Metal has always been all about the art, and we're just lucky enough to have guys like Amano want the coverage in the magazine. We all win!

Dear H.M.,
It seems Heavy Metal Magazine is disappearing from army PX's. As far as I know there is only one place that holds Heavy Metal and that is a really big PX in Baghdad. I heard a rumor that certain people are trying to get rid of them because of the violence and other sexual content. I think it's the same people who are trying to get rid of nude magazines. Pathetic. People who don't fight the war on the front are trying to get rid of things that improve the morale of the soldiers. Personally, I've been ordering back orders up the rear. I think by the end of my deployment I should have the whole collection! I'll probably donate it to a MWR (Morale, Welfare, and Recreation) facility before I go home.
Clarris

Dear Clarris,
Sorry to hear Heavy Metal is so hard to find on PX's, that makes me sad as we love you guys and all that you're doing! I think that is beyond cool you'd consider making a donation like that—give me the address for the MWR, and I'll send a set of my own!

Dear H.M.,
So what do you guys think of the November 2008 issue... seems to be chock full of goodness. From my opinion it's the best issue of Heavy Metal ever, mostly due to the fact that my original story, "Even Devils Have A Heart" actually got published in it. I'm very excited about it and the fact that it is surrounded by such great writers and artists. I feel very lucky and blessed.
Xaltair

Dear Xaltair
That is the ultimate dream come true for all of us artists out there. Hope it inspires others to send more short stories—and look forward to your next submission.

MEDIA BLASTERS

STUDY-A-BROAD

Certain subjects being taught at college aren't necessarily on the curriculum. Sex education is one of them. At an all-girls school, an intrepid teacher takes it upon himself to educate his students in the ways of sexual knowledge. Using (and abusing) his authority, he turns his hottest students into his fun and his (kinky) way with them. By the end, these girls will learn some lessons they'll never forget. At another college, a floating phallus-shaped artifact possesses magical powers that turn innocent girls into raging sex maniacs. When a teacher is seduced by one of the students, he becomes possessed and goes hog-wild with powers that his female students can't resist.

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SHUSAKU THE LETCH – REPLAY

Misgiving at a demon's bondage, the lunatic letch Shusaku has devious plans for its female inhabitants. One by one, he enslaves the innocent females in order to assault them with all manners of sexual humiliation. And when the girls try to turn the tables, Shusaku only makes it worse for them. Blurring the line between agony and ecstasy, Shusaku will teach these girls a lesson they'll never forget.

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SEXUAL PURSUIT

Taji just got himself a new board game and he can't wait to play. What Taji doesn't know is that the game possesses secret powers — sexual powers, to be precise. He and his stepmother decide to give it a try. The game requires drawing cards from a deck that have sexual instructions on them. Though it starts out innocently enough, Taji soon experiences sexual feelings for his opponent. As the game progresses and the sexual tension escalates, it culminates in a sexual free-for-all with his stepmother and computer.

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CLASS REUNION - YESTERDAY ONCE MORE

After years of being apart, the Sakura Drama Club come together for a reunion. Some things have changed over the years, some have not. Old friends pick up where they left off. Old passions are rekindled as long lost loves come face to face again, while new passions ignite. Not all of these relationships will end happily, but the opportunity to come together again and reminisce might make it all worthwhile.

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BLACKMAIL

Asuka is thrilled when she gets a letter from Ryosuke, the most handsome boy in school, revealing that he has romantic feelings for her. Unfortunately Asuka tells this good news to the treacherous Aya, a fellow schoolgirl who still harbors an obsessive crush on Ryosuke. Aya overlooks with Asuka's sister and so-called friends to uncover Asuka's darkest secret. Soon, Asuka gets another letter warning her to stay away from Ryosuke — a letter containing a pornographic picture of Asuka that could shame her forever!

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HUMILIATED WIVES

The intimidating Shigeki Kayama runs a loan company. Because he'll do anything to collect his money, he strikes fear in the hearts of creditors everywhere. Sometimes, he will accept sex with creditor's wives as payment if they can't pay up in a timely manner. Since these hapless women are in his possession, fear is replaced by lust and the humiliated wives soon become his sex slaves.

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STEP UP LOVE STORY

Vol. 2: To Have And To Hold

Newlyweds Makoto and Yuna Otsuka continue to face a variety of sexual challenges that test them spanning wife-swappers, sex-dominance and lust. When their neighbors win the lottery and invite them on a trip, Makoto and Yuna must figure out how to make love in their hotel room without disturbing people around them. Then Yuna takes a job as a waitress that requires her to dress in a skimpy maid-skirt. This, of course, has Makoto ordered in more ways than one.

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SLEAZY FAMILY

Everyone knows that the family that plays together, stays together. Especially when it's a sleazy family! Masaru walks in on his dad Miyuki and catches them in intimate movement. Asking he dare to run away, but Miyuki refuses him to stay. When Masaru's step-mom (Miyuki's sister) sees what they're up to, she just has to join in. Meanwhile, over at the hostess bar shop, Kenji delays on training the manager likes to administer sexy punishments when his female hosts break the rules. Eventually, Masaru, invades the party and finds a family affair waiting for him.

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PERVS ON A TRAIN

When horny men and beautiful women cram themselves into the train for their early morning commute, all that body to body contact begins to take a sexual toll on the passengers. The men's sexual progress quickly leads to all-out molestation. Shocked, the women are resistant at first. But there's no escape from a moving train. Soon's warning before their reluctant ladies give in to their own perverted passions and go with the flow. Soon the whole train is alive with sexual energy as it drives and thrusts toward its shipping-we destination.

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JIBURIRU SECOND COMING - BOOK ONE

After surviving the previous sexually-charged adventures, Mr. Begum has settled down for both Kaoru and Rika. However, they aren't given much time for some protracted snuggling as a new menace enters the scene. Rika is called into action once again as Devil Angel. Soon she is caught in a controlled trap and taken prisoner. Desperate measures are taken, and Kaoru gives his entire bestiality heart in order to bring forth the power of a new devil angel.

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MATTHEW LAZNICKA GALLERY

ROBOT BASTARD

Matthew Laznicka was born in Racine, Wisconsin on February 28, 1968. From childhood he always found solace in drawing and painting the images inspired by science-fiction, movies and comic books. After high school Matthew attended The Milwaukee Institute for Art & Design, where he received a degree in illustration.

Clients of Matthews have included Edios, Human Head, Telos Publishing, Seattle Sound Magazine, Weekly Reader, Carlton Books, Z-Man Games, Madison Magazine, FHM Magazine, Mercedes Benz and Volvo.

When not illustrating Matthew is with his wife, Sheri and their two children: Ashton and Violet. He enjoys spending time with family, camping, old movies and stop-animation.

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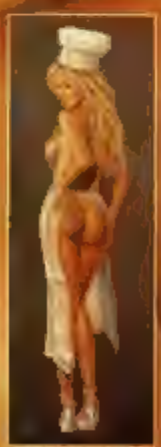
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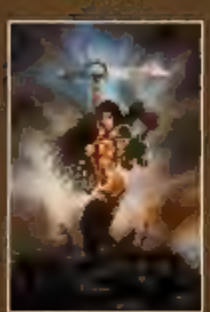
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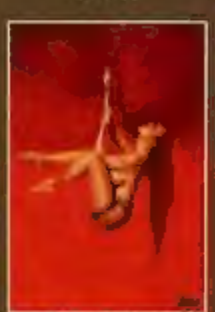
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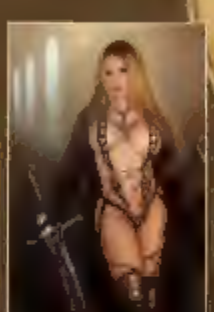
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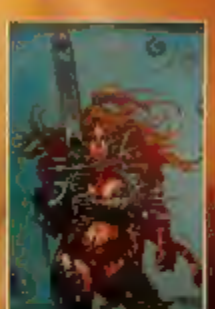
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THE MAN WHO WAS THE KING

Kirby: the King of the Comics by Mark Evanier is one of the best art books you're likely to see in this or any other year. You don't have to be a huge comics fan to like this book, you just have to be some one with an open mind and an appreciation for some of the most beautiful, imaginative art ever created by a human hand. Evanier's book is at once an affectionate biography of comics best-known creator, and a coffee table art book. It succeeds in both areas. The reproduction of the color and black and white art just sparkles. If you can't understand how great Jack Kirby is after seeing his work reproduced here, then there's probably no hope for you. Based on the art alone, this would be a terrific book but former assistant and long-time Kirby friend Evanier's accompanying text is eminently readable, very informative without being overly pedantic. It paints a sympathetic portrait of Kirby, as a man who was a creative genius, but a terrible businessman who was never able to reap the awards his work so obviously deserved. Marvel Comics was indeed the "House That Jack Built" but the entire comic book industry would be a desolate, boring wasteland if you removed every character he ever created or worked on.

Based on the way Kirby was treated by various comics moguls, his book could have been a tragedy; Evanier wisely doesn't belabor a dead horse but if there is a villain in this book, it's quite obviously Martin Goodman, the odious head of the Marvel Empire, who alienated Kirby through his relentless cheapness and unwillingness to give Kirby health insurance. But fortunately, it has a happy ending of sorts. After leaving comics for the animation business, Kirby's appeal has increase considerably. Finally got health insurance from his employer and, with the advent of independent comics, was able to put out a whole raft of his own concepts with no editorial interference. As Evanier notes, Kirby also got respect, spending the last ten years of his life receiving kudos from fans and pros alike and finally being acknowledged for all of his great work, allaying any fears Kirby might have had that his contributions to the comics medium would be forgotten.

I like this book a lot. It was well designed, from the front end papers to the rear end papers. It should be essential reading for any comics fan and deserves a place in art school libraries and the book collections of Kirby fans everywhere. Let me end with a final note to Mark Evanier. As Buddy You did right by good old Jack, and knocked this one out of the park! *Kirby: King of the Comics* is available from the Abrams website, at better book stores everywhere, or you can get a copy from Bud's Art Books www.BudsArtBooks.com. As always, tell 'em *Heavy Metal* sent you.

KING OF ALL COLLECTIBLES

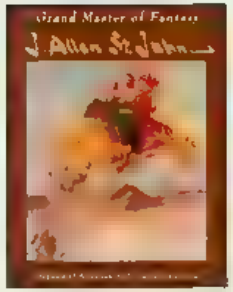
In my last column I promised a review of the way cool "Kong's Last Stand" statue from Weta Studios. Unfortunately between my 75th anniversary articles about King Kong and Doc Savage I ran out of room. So here's my somewhat belated review. To begin with, this statue is big. From wingtip to base, it stands 23" high and is 11" wide. It depicts Kong's counterattack against the relentless assault of the biplane fighters who ultimately shoot him off the top of the Empire State Building in one of the most famous death scenes in all of cinema. And I'm happy to report that the designers and sculptors at Weta Workshop, sculptors David Fremont and Mary MacLachlan, and finisher Bill Hunt, have done a magnificent job of bringing this movie scene to vivid life. Kudos to everybody involved. This sensational statue would be a striking addition to the collection of any movie fan. Just as in a Frazetta painting, the artists picked the moment of peak action, where Kong has grabbed the end of the plane's wing and is just about to hurl it off into space to spiral down in a fiery crash. Weta Studios is the arm of Peter Jackson's New Zealand operation that is charged with creating collectibles based on Jackson's films, other classic films, and also produces original collectibles such as the Dr. Grordbort's series of Steampunk-styled ray guns.

But back to "Kong's Last Stand." To begin with, the level of detail on this statue is magnificent, right down to a tiny pilot and gunner sitting in the cockpit of the doomed plane, and the correct squadron insignia from the movie on the plane's side. The top of the observation tower from the Empire State Building, which Kong is standing on looks just like the real thing, and the whole statue is set on a faux marble look base with Art Deco detailing on the corners that sets off the statue it rests on perfectly. The rest of the statue is equally well designed for easy assembly and display. The statue ships in three pieces all encased in Styrofoam. The plane, including Kong's paws on the wingtips, is one piece. Metal pins on the ends of the paws slide nicely into the slots in his arms and nest solidly inside. Kong's body is attached to the top of the observation tower and is secured with a metal pin that fits into the top of the tower. I was impressed with just how quick and easy it was to assemble this statue and how beautiful the end result was.

Judging from this piece and all the other terrific Kong collectibles you can see on the Weta web site, it's obvious that a great deal of talent and care goes into the design and manufacture of any Weta Collectibles product. As a lifelong Kong buff, I have to say that this statue is one of the coolest Kong collectibles I've ever seen. I give it my highest recommendation. If your local comics shop or collectibles store doesn't stock "Kong's Last Stand," you can order it from the Weta website: www.wetaNZ.com. It costs $130.00 U.S. plus shipping. Better hurry though if you want one. It's a limited edition of only 5,000 pieces and I think that there are only a few left in the U.S. warehouse. Thanks to PR Ace Magnus Hjort of Weta Studios for making sure I got my review copy. As always, when you order, tell 'em *Heavy Metal* sent you.

THE GODFATHER OF MODERN FANTASY ART: J. ALLEN ST. JOHN

Most modern fantasy fans are probably oblivious to J. Allen St. John, even if they're already fans of St. John's most famous disciples Frank Frazetta and Roy Krenkel. However, Vanguard Productions new book: *Grand Master of Fantasy The Paintings of J. Allen St. John*, should help to alleviate that woeful ignorance. As this book amply demonstrates, that title is no exaggeration. St. John was indeed the inspiration for several generations of fantasy illustrators and painters, who have gone on to influence the entire fantasy art genre. As EC Comics legend Al Williamson commented in a 1981 interview St. John's work was, "...great stuff. That hasn't been touched. He's still the greatest Burroughs illustrator." Although I've been a lifelong fan of Frazetta's work, and Roy Krenkel's, too, I was struck by just how much both artists took from St. John, especially in their paintings illustrating the works of Edgar Rice Burroughs from the early 60s. And it wasn't just Frazetta and Krenkel, either. Practically every pulp illustrator who did fantasy and science fiction work must have been looking at St. John's work at some point or other, which makes it a double shame that his work isn't better known to modern audiences.



Author Stephen Korshak does a great job of profiling St. John, from his earliest years as a student artist in Europe to his last days as a venerable, much beloved painter and art teacher at the Art Institute of Chicago. Writing with commendable thoroughness, Korshak covers each period in St. John's life in sufficient detail to give readers a good sense of how St. John lived and worked. Accompanying Korshak's informative text are essays by Frank Frazetta, Al Williamson, and Edgar Rice Burroughs grandson, the late Danton Burroughs.

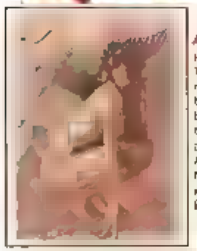
However, the real treat here for any fantasy art fan is all the gorgeous artwork that fills this book. There are many full color pages of St. John's paintings illustrating Edgar Rice Burroughs and other pulp writers, like Burroughs imitator Otis A. Kline, and a wealth of fine art paintings, drawings, sketches and photos covering the length and breadth of St. John's extraordinary life and career. As is usually the case with any book put out by Vanguard, the reproduction of the color plates is superb, even when reproducing old pulp magazine covers. The artwork here is so vibrant, colorful and well designed that it practically leaps from the page. I certainly hope that this excellent volume, and Vanguard's earlier book on St. John's black and white illustrations, *Grand Master of Adventure Art. The Drawings of J. Allen St. John*, will serve to spark a Renaissance in the appreciation of this timeless, masterful artist. Anyone who loves fantasy art, who's ever thrilled to the adventures in a Tarzan or Mars or Pellucidar novel by E.R. Burroughs needs to own this book. I think it's one of the best art books to come out in the last 20 years. I give it my highest recommendation. If you can't find it at a bookstore in your area, you can order it in several different editions from Vanguard Productions, including hardback, paperback and a limited edition that is autographed by Jack Williamson, Danton Burroughs, and Stephen Korshak that also includes an extra portfolio of St. John's work. Visit www.vanguardproductions.net to check out this book and all the other terrific art and music books Vanguard puts out. As always, tell 'em *Heavy Metal* sent you.

VAMPIRA: THE MOVIE

If you never saw the Vampira show back in the 1950's you probably wonder why anyone would care about a L.A. horror show host who only lasted about one season, from 1954- 1955, with a brief revival on another station that didn't last either. *Vampira, The Movie* chronicles the brief rise and long decline of Maila Nurmi's fame, from becoming an overnight sensation in the mid-50's to someone who retired from show business and was largely forgotten except by punk rockers and horror aficionados. What's really striking about this film is that it illustrates how extensively Vampira influenced pop culture, despite the relative paucity of her oeuvre. She never made a lot of money from playing Vampira, but she exerted a hell of a lot of influence on American pop culture, basically creating the genre of horror movie TV host and setting the template for the hordes of local horror show hosts that would spring up throughout the 1950's and 60's. One of the reasons why Vampira didn't succeed is that she was too far ahead of her time. She was doing her show before Universal released its library of horror films for nationwide syndication, which led to a horror boom in the late 50's and early 60's that lead, among other things, to the creation of James Warren's *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. But as this excellent documentary shows, without Vampira there would have been no Zacherley, no Sevmour, and certainly no Elvira Mistress of the Dark.

In addition to long interviews with the late Maila Nurmi herself, the film features interviews with horror actors like Julie Strain and Debbie Rochon, exploitation veterans Sid Haig and Bill Mosely, *Famous Monsters* Ghoul-in-Chief Forrest J. Ackerman, Misfits frontman Jerry Only, and modern horror hosts like Cassandra (Elvira) Peterson, Penny Dreadful and Jamie Deadly, all discussing Vampira's pervasive influence. Most of Vampira's two minutes of screen time from Ed Wood's notoriously awful *Plan Nine From Outer Space* are included in the film, but it would have been nice to see more of her screen appearances, like her work in *The Beat Generation* or *Sex Kittens Go To College*. Still this film should answer just about every question you ever had about Vampira, Maila Nurmi, and everything she inspired. Director Kevin Sean Michaels has fashioned the ultimate cult film about one of the cult film world's most fascinating figures. I give this documentary a big thumbs up. It's a fascinating glimpse into the quixotic, decades long making of a cult figure. If you want to know more, visit www.vampirathemovie.com, and if you're dying to get your hands on a copy, it's featured on Amazon.com.

SQP ART BOOKS SHOWCASE FANTASY ART AT ITS MOST FANTASTIC!

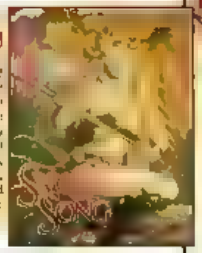


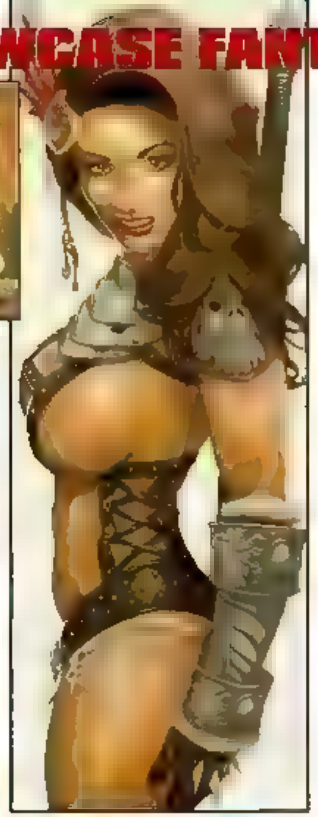
Angel Song

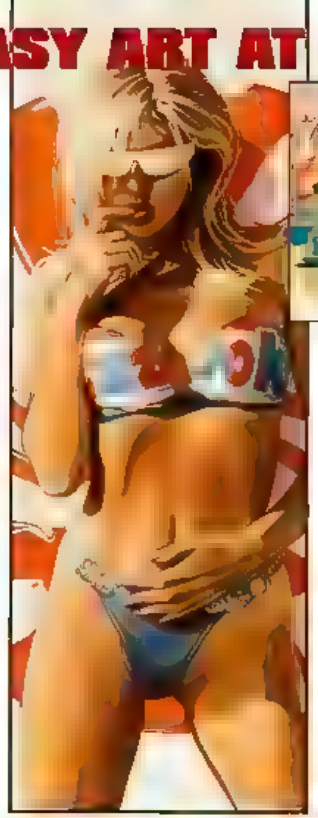
Heavenly Bodies
These creatures really ARE out-of-this-world! You'll be on Cloud 9 with these amorous angels! Art by Aranza, Dave Nestler, Sosa, and many others. 64pgs full color.

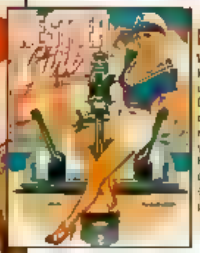
Sword Song

Sisterhood of Steel
The newest of the "Song" series, this time showcasing everyone's favorite chicks with swords! Artwork by Dave Dunstan, Daniel Horne, Blas Gallego, Fashner & Carwin, James Hottinger and more. 64pgs full color.







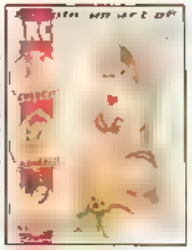


Nestler Girls

When your name is known for a certain style... you've arrived! Dave Nestler creates some of the hottest, most eye-popping young ladies you'll ever have the good fortune to dress over! Welcome to the new age of pin-up! 48pgs full color

Dickens 1

The British master of the "naughty" pin-up girl! A true talent and a man who worked well into his nineties painting young lovelies. Nice work, old man! 48pgs of full color



Fairy Song

Fairies, pixies, sprites, nymphs... all the wee horny folk of the forest, but just the sexy ones! Artwork by Anibal Mazzocchi, Arantza Cuevas, Pilucks, Sosa, and many others. 64pgs full color

Mermaid Song

Desires of the Deep
Get your swim trunks OFF and get in the water! Artwork by Pelaez, Cuevas, Dunstan, Hottinger, Fashner & Carwin, and many more! 64pgs full color.

Art of Carlos Diez

It's one thing to create hot sexy pin-up paintings. It's quite another to populate them with well-known Hollywood starlets. You'll be AMAZED who you'll see. 104pgs full color

Art of Henslee

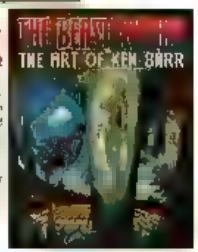
Here's a man who paints pin-ups of women who actually LOOK like real women! See the true beauty of the female form in his works! 48pgs full color

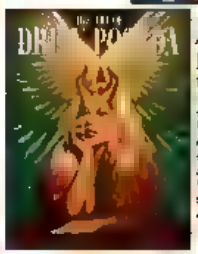
Santa's Helper

Hey, it's cold up North, and Santa needs more than Mrs. Claus to keep warm! Art by Buck Pelaez, Lewis Gulick and more. Cover by Dave Nestler. 64pgs black & white.

The Beast Within

Art of Ken Barr
One of the great pioneers of realism in comic and fantasy art. An overview of Ken Barr's career is a must for ANY collector! Outstanding work. 48pgs Full color





Art of Posada

Drew Posada takes the line that separates Fantasy from realism and happily rips it to shreds! Truly awesome artwork from a truly talented man! 48pgs full color

Art of Brian Rood

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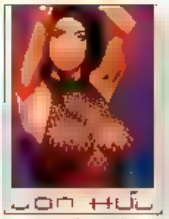
Art [illegible]
64 [illegible]

Art of [illegible] Nido
128 [illegible]

Fatal Beauty [illegible]
64 [illegible]

Horn[illegible]book
64 [illegible]

Pucker Art of Busch
48 pgs [illegible]



Art of Jon Hul
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The Art of Nebres
64 page black & white

The Art of Pelaez
64 page black & white

The Art of Roca
64 page black & white

Art of Koufay
48 page full color

Art of Marcus Gray
48 pgs full color

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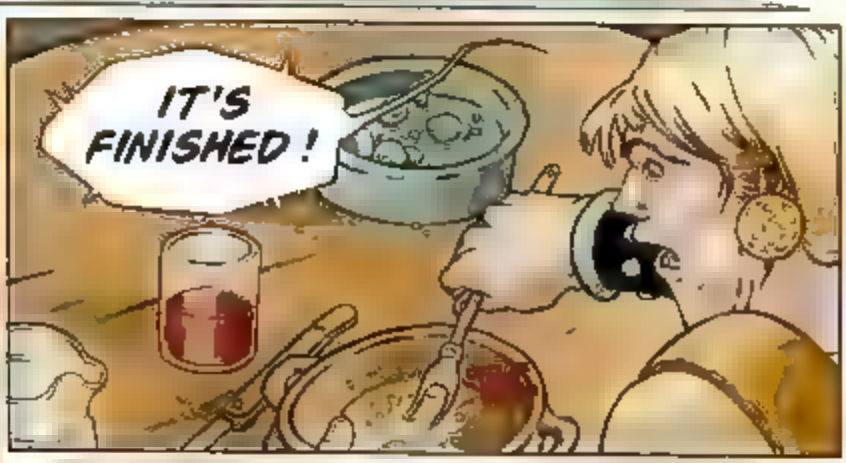
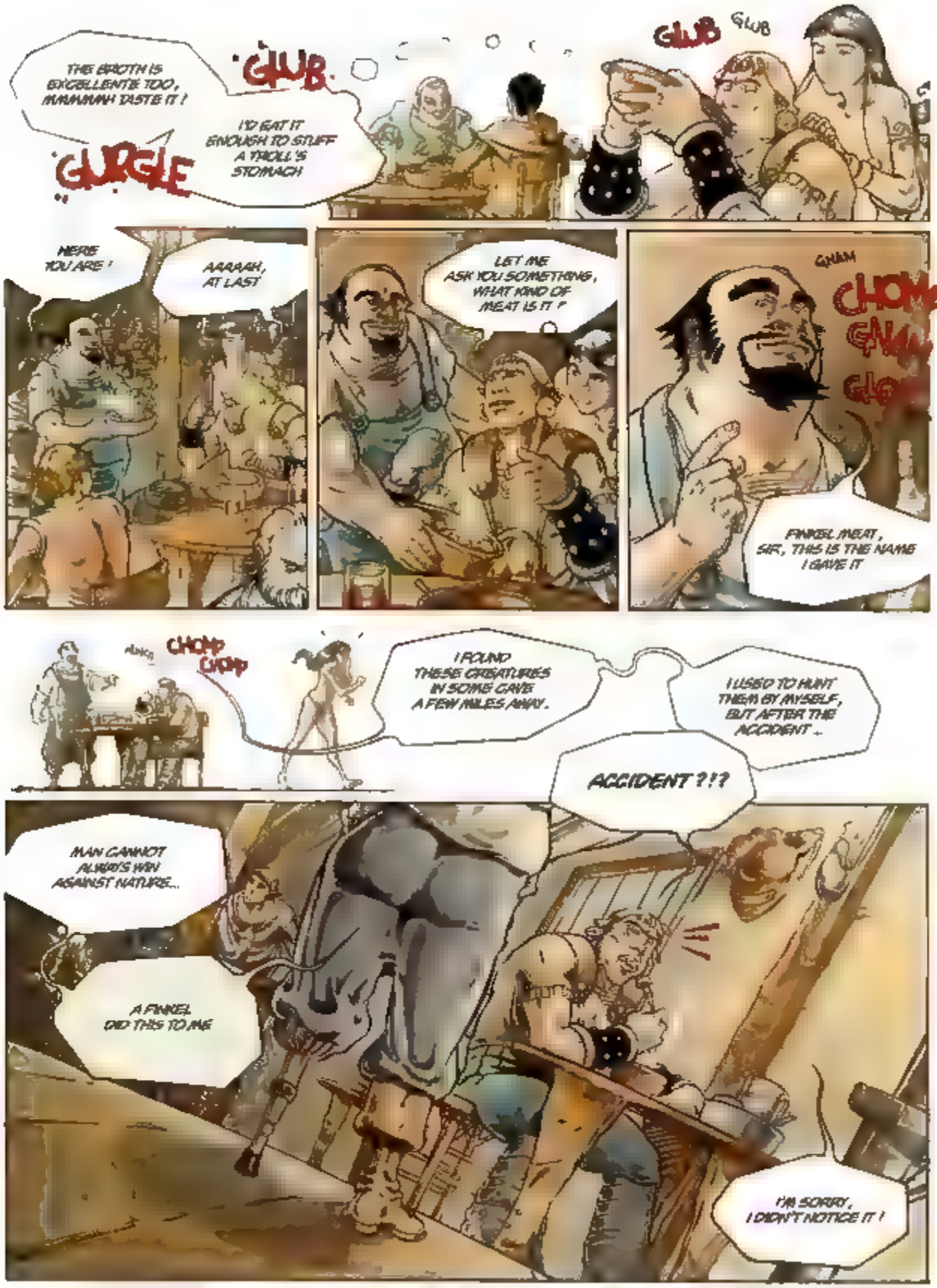
THE MEAT

STORY RICCI ART SIMONACCI




THE BROTH IS EXCELLENTE TOO, MMMMMH TASTE IT !
GURGLE
GLUB
I'D EAT IT ENOUGH TO STUFF A TROLL'S STOMACH
GLUB GLUB
HERE YOU ARE !
AAAAAH, AT LAST
LET ME ASK YOU SOMETHING, WHAT KIND OF MEAT IS IT ?
GNAM
CHOMP
FINKEL MEAT, SIR, THIS IS THE NAME I GAVE IT
CHOMP CHOMP
I FOUND THESE CREATURES IN SOME CAVE A FEW MILES AWAY.
I USED TO HUNT THEM BY MYSELF, BUT AFTER THE ACCIDENT ..
ACCIDENT ?!?
MAN CANNOT ALWAYS WIN AGAINST NATURE...
A FINKEL DID THIS TO ME
I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T NOTICE IT !

SINCE THAT DAY I'VE NEVER BEEN IN THOSE CAVE AGAIN
SO I HAVE TO PAY SOMEONE TO HUNT FOR ME.
MMMMM, REALLY ?
AND HOW MUCH WOULD YOU PAY FOR ONE OF THOSE BEASTS ?
MORE OR LESS 600 COINS EACH
WOW !
WHY DID YOU ASK IT ? ARE YOU INTERESTED IN IT ?
SURE ! THIS IS KOG, THE BEST HUNTER OF THE SEVEN COUNTRIES !
OK KOG, I PUT YOU TO THE TEST, LET'S SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO !
MMMMM...
I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU A FAVOUR...
CHOMP!
WHAT ?
IN THE CAVE I LOST A LEG AND A KNIFE THAT IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR ME...
I WOULD GIVE YOU SOME MORE MONEY IF YOU BROUGHT IT BACK
CHOMP
THAT'S A DEAL !
YOU CAN COUNT ON ME !

THIS TIME WE WERE SO LUCKY.
WITH THIS MONEY THERE WILL BE OATS FOR YOU AND A WONDERFUL LIFE FOR ME
THERE WE GO, FINALLY !
START SHIVERING, KOG THE EXTERMINATOR IS COMING !

IT'S REALLY DARK IN HERE, IT WILL BE BETTER TO LIGHT A TORCH
NOTHING !
I'VE BEEN WALKING FOR HOURS AND THERE ARE NO FINGEL IN HERE.
..NO FINGELS, NO MONEY.
WHAT A BAD LUCK !
HEY.
THIS IS THE HOST'S KNIFE I HAD TO BRING BACK
BETTER THAN NOTHING ! MAYBE WHIT THIS I CAN STAY TO THE INN FOR A FEW DAYS MORE
AAAAAARGH!

OOOOH ! IT SEEMS THAT MY MAGIC DAGGER DID IT'S WORK ANOTHER TIME !
WHAT A VERY PLUMP FINGEL WE HAVE !
AT LAST YOU ARE HERE, I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU FOR HOURS
COME ON, WE ARE LATE, WE HAVE TO COME BACK HOME
YOU KNOW, I'VE GREAT PROJECTS FOR YOU.
WHAT ABOUT.... MMMMMM!...
SWEET AND SOUR KOG MEET, IT SOUNDS GOOD, DOESN'T IT ?!?
SOB !!

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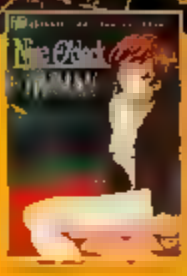

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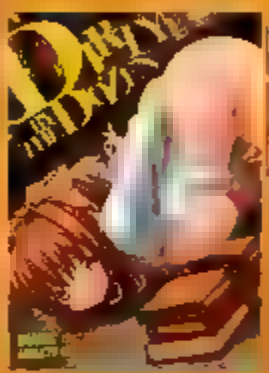

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CHI CHI CHI CHI CHI CHI CHI
Your Chosen.
Look. Bleeding.
SPLISH SPLASH
SPLASH

The Warrior attacks his back.
A friend dies.
Another watches over him.....
Evil drops blood.
The sword burns in the night.
The Golden Hawks cut is warning.
"Death this Tower!!".

24 HOUR MAN

PART 2

Writers: Joe Pearson
Jeff Conner
Artist: Young Ki Yoon
Colorist: Sungha Hwang
Lettering: Comicraft

HEE HEE HEE HEE
HEE HEE HEE HEE

SPLSH SPLSH SPLSH
FWOOSH
SHUNCH
SWOOSH
SPLO
HEE HEE HEE HEE
HEE HEE HEE

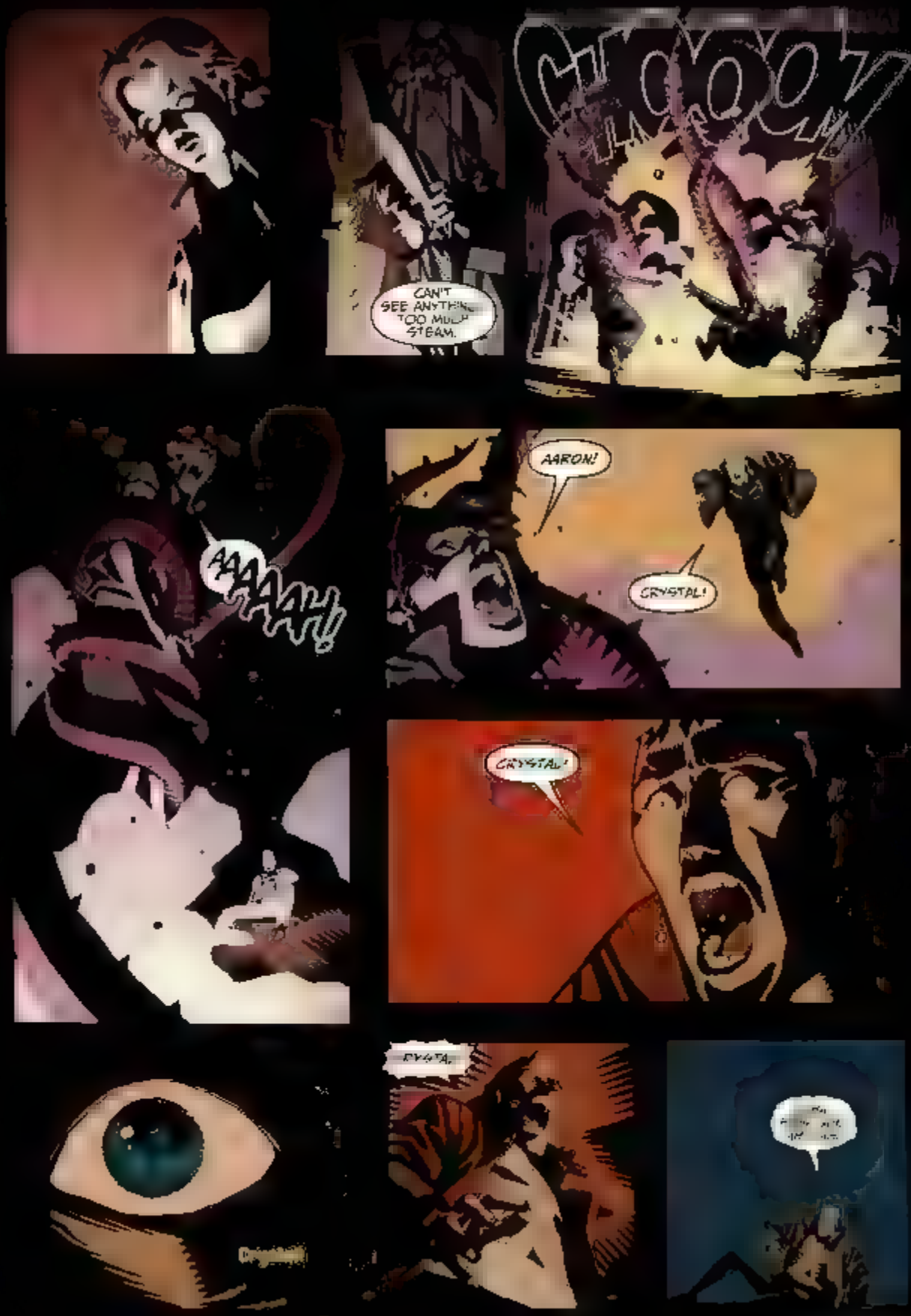
FWOOSH
SWISSSSH
WHEW
CHUD
WHOOSH
SPLOOOSH

EYES
IF HE WAS JUST PLAYING POSSUM
WELCOME TO MY WORLD SHAMAN
WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY FOR A LONG TIME
YOUR TURN
BABYLON WILL FALL DEVIL MOM! THE CITY SAVIOR WILL BRING YOU DOWN!
OH YES, THE "CITY SAVIOR" THE ONE THAT RAN LIKE A DOG FROM MY RAZOR GIRL AND HER MEN. HE IS A MEANINGLESS DISTRACTION AT BEST IN LESS THEN 12 HOURS THE CITY WILL BELONG TO ME, BODY AND SOUL
BUT FIRST THINGS FIRST OCTOR, PREPARE THE SHAMAN FOR THE OMEGA PIT
AHHHHHHH!

I'M JARUN.
YES
YEEEE
OH- OH OH!

THINK ABOUT IT ANGEL. THIS TIME TOMORROW WE'LL BE THE KING AND QUEEN OF VENICE
I DON'T KNOW BABY. HIS IS THE MAYOR! KAROSHI! THESE GUYS DON'T FUCK AROUND!
EXACTLY! THEY'VE BEEN SCREWING WITH VENICE EVER SINCE THE FLASHDANCE. THEY'VE TURNED THE CITY INTO THEIR OWN LITTLE POLICE STATE
NOW THEY'RE SNATCHING PEOPLE OFF THE STREET. WE KNOW WHERE THEY'RE HIDING. WE CAN STOP THEM DEAD
AARON, IF WE GET IN THEIR WAY WE'RE THE ONES THAT ARE GOING TO WIND UP DEAD!
DON'T WORRY ANGEL. THEY CAN'T TOUCH US. WE'RE GOING TO LIVE FOREVER
BODY TO BODY
SOUL TO SOUL
GOT 7 PEOPLE
GREEEK

4
THEN MUST BE THE PLACE
GET YOUR CAMERA READY
LET'S SHOW THE PEOPLE WHAT'S DOWN THIS "RABBIT HOLE!"


CAN'T SEE ANYTHING TOO MUCH STEAM.
CHOOK
AAAAAH!
AARON!
CRYSTAL!
CRYSTAL!

PAPI AMIGO, YOU'VE BEEN OUT FOR SEVERAL HOURS

CRYSTAL OH ANGEL WHAT DID I GET INTO

YOU'VE GOT TO HELP ME. I'VE GOT TO FIND

EL TORO KNOWS WHERE YOU WANT TO JOURNEY, BUT HE WILL NOT TAKE YOU THERE

THEY TOOK MY WOMAN. THEY'RE TAKING PEOPLE OFF THE STREETS, TURNING THEM INTO MONSTERS! THEY'RE—
EL TORO KNOWS WELL WHAT THESE EVIL MEN ARE DOING

AS YOU SEE, THEY HAVE PUT THEIR MARK ON ME!
CREEEEEEEK

THEY ARE THE SERVANTS OF THE EVIL ONE EL DIABLO BUT I CANNOT HELP YOU. EL TORO HAS NO WISH TO RETURN TO THEIR SLAVE PITS NO. HIS PLACE IS HERE WITH THESE MUCHACHOS
THESE EVIL MEN ARE THE SAME ONES THAT CAUSED THE GREAT FIRE—THE FLASHDANCE! THEY SAY THAT IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! MANY CITIES WERE DESTROYED BY THE FIRE MOUNTAINS EVEN THE QUEEN OF ANGELS WAS STRUCK
VENICE BEACH WAS SPARED THE WORST IT IS A CLEAN LAND, NEAR THE OCEAN MOTHER. THAT IS WHY THE EVIL MEN HAVE COME HERE
WON'T BE ABLE IDE AWAY DOWN HERE FOREVER
WHEN THE CITY IS COMPLETELY THE ES THEY'LL COME FI YOU

WHAT'S THAT?
WHAT'S GOING
QUIET HE'S COMING!
THE
THE
FOR
WUMMM

WUMMM

YEAH. THIS IS IT. THIS IS WHERE I'LL FIND

POK
THUD
WHSH

WHOOAARRRRRAAGH!
RRRIIIPP
Aaron feels his new-found power drain from him, filling the monster's bloated body.

Hour Seventeen
BY ALL RIGHTS HE SHOULD BE DEAD MY GENERAL
WHAT? WE NEVER BEEN HERE
BUT YOU HAVE A REPORTER WE PICKED YOU UP WITH YOUR LITTLE GIRL FRIEND A WEEK AGO WHEN YOU WERE SNOOPING AROUND
AND WHAT A TASTY TREAT SHE WAS!
CRYSTAL! I KNOW SHE'S ALIVE WHERE'VE YOU PUT HER?
IN A FEW HOURS YOU'LL BE DEAD AND OLD VENICE ALONG WITH YOU. AT MIDNIGHT TONIGHT MY GENERAL WILL UNLEASH HIS ARMY ON THE CITY AND SEIZE COMPLETE CONTROL

IF THE 'PEOPLE' WELL IF THEY REFUSE TO ENTER MY BRAVE NEW WORLD, THEN WE'LL SIMPLY REMOVE THEM. YOU SEE, THERE'S AN ABANDONED NUCLEAR SUBMARINE LYING JUST 3 MILES OFF SHORE AND GUESS WHAT'S ON BOARD? AN UNEXPLODED 10 MEGATON WARHEAD!
IF THE 'PEOPLE' GIVE US ANY TROUBLE THEN WE'LL SIMPLY WASH THEM AWAY AND START OVER QUICK AND CLEAN
WE, HOWEVER, HAVE NOT BEEN SO QUICK AND CLEAN SNOOPING AROUND HERE WITH YOUR LITTLE FRIENDS STICKING YOUR NOSE WHERE IT DOESN'T BELONG
DR. BUTTERFLY INTRODUCED YOU TO THE OMEGA PIT--
BUT YOU EMERGED UNCHANGED AND WITHOUT ANY SIGN OF MUTATION WHATSOEVER
AAAAH!
SO I STUCK MY KNIFE INTO YOUR HEART--
HUUURK
AND PUSHED YOU OFF THE VENICE PIER. IF ANYONE FOUND YOUR BODY IT WOULD LOOK LIKE A SIMPLE CASE OF MURDER
YOU SEE, QUICK AND CLEAN. EXCEPT YOU DIDN'T DIE. YOU'VE COME BACK TO US, FILLED WITH TREMENDOUS ENERGY AND POWER. OBVIOUSLY THE OMEGA PIT DID AFFECT YOU AFTER ALL, ALTHOUGH IT WAS SUPPOSED TO RENDER YOU OBEDIENT TO US. PERHAPS A SECOND VISIT TO THE PIT WILL DO THE TRICK

AAA!
AAH!
Covering us.
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
CRYSTAL!

ENOUGH!
WHAM!
AUGHH!
WOOSH
SLOSH

FA-BOOOM
DON'T FIGHT HIM. WITHOUT THE SWORD YOU CANNOT DEFEAT HIM!
DON'T THINK I HAVE A CHOICE
HHRRRRMMMMMMMM
INNNNNN

KIM!
STONE FREE
GOT TO
GET AWAY
KOOOOM
FAA
EEEAAAAA!!
HARK! RACK THEM DOWN AND ELIMINATE THEM!

I'M STONE FREE TO DO WHAT I PLEASE STONE FREE TO RIDE THE BREEZE
STONE FREE I CAN'T STAY I'VE GOT TO
FWOOOSH
VRP
VRP
VRP
VRP
SHREEEEEEEEE

SKREEASSH
WOOSH
SKEEEEEEEEEE
KA TOOM

SCREEEEE
SPLASH
EEEEEEE
WOOOSH
CHING
RAAAAGH

KIIIIIEEEEEE
FWOOOSH!
SHICK!
SHICK!
HUAAA
WHOK
HUNNNGH
WHISH!
AAAAAH!
KRACK
SHAAAPH
SSSSSWOOOSH!
FWOOOSH!
UHNNN

HuURRAAAAAAGHH!
SPLASH SPLASH SPLASH

FOOOSH
AARON ?
AARON
BANG
IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY BABY I'M HERE IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY
I'M SORRY DIDN KNOW

IT'S TIME
TIME FOR WHAT, OLD MAN? SHE'S DEAD AND I'M DYING. IT'S OVER
NO. THE KING CAN BRING HER BACK
YEAH, THE "KING" THERE'S NO KING HERE. OLD MAN. ONLY THE DEAD AND DYING
AH BUT THERE IS HE AWAITS YOU THERE, IN THE TOWER
THAT'S THE NORTON. IT'S BEEN ABANDONED FOR FIFTY YEARS
THE TOWER HAS MANY LEVELS AND REALITIES LIKE THE SWORD LIKE VENICE ITSELF
"USE YOUR INNER EYE SEE BEYOND"
THE SWORD AWAITS CLAIM IT SAVE THE GIRL SAVE THE CITY!

24-HOUR MAN CONTINUED ON PAGE 89

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Somewhere on the East River

by Jason Ortega

We've only made a key to this back door; only way in other than the river. Wanted to let you have a lookee before we process the place. Just like the report said; big stash of chemical narcotics suspected mixed into the pesticide. Beat cop called it in; found a spill on the loading dock. Drove the dogs crazy, they made 'em sick.

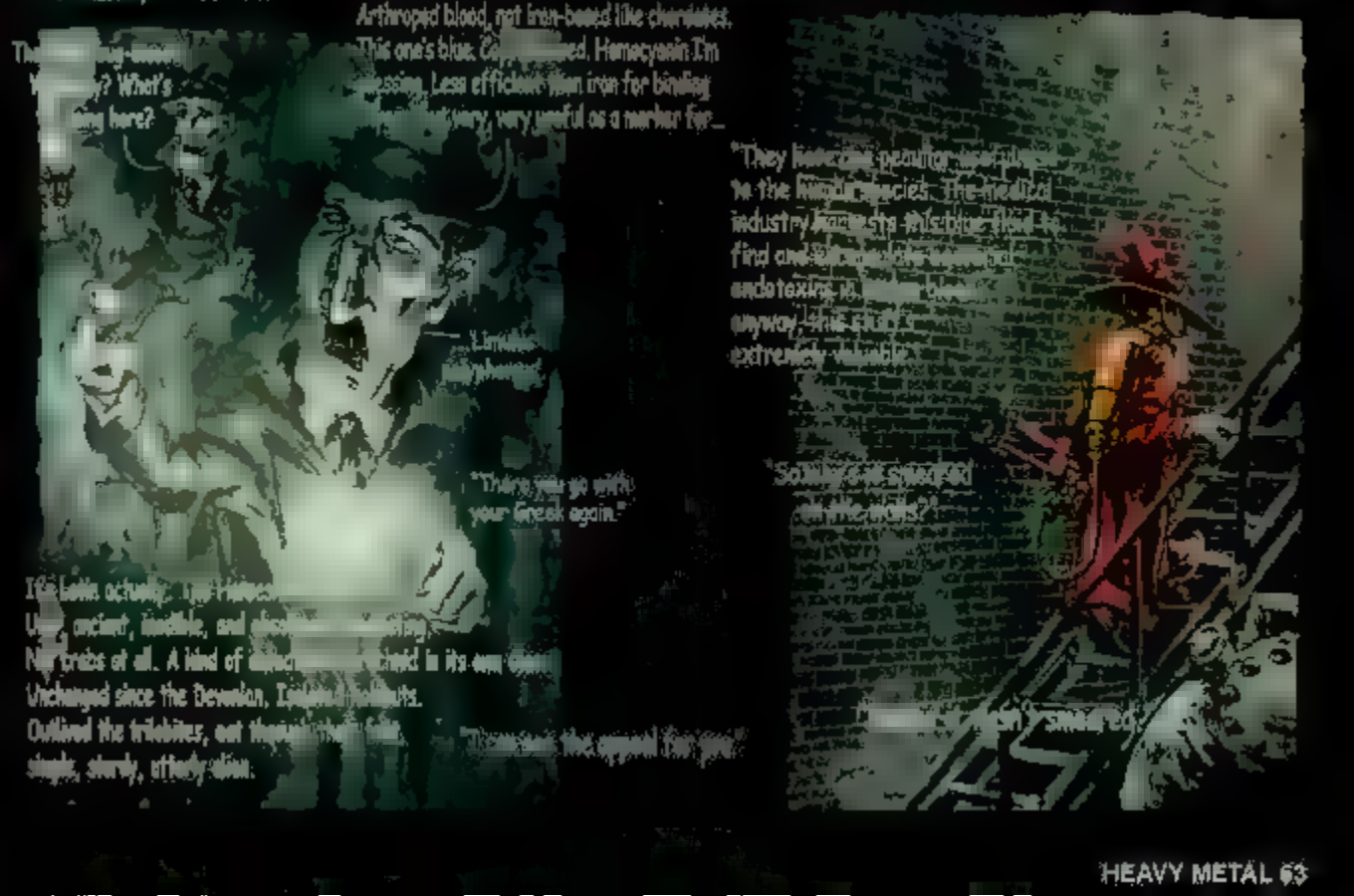
Whoever's running this operation cleared out in a real hurry before we & the boys arrived with a warrant. Don't know how they got wind we were coming for a peepersound. Cut the lights, too, else these guys can see in the dark. Looks pretty suspicious to me, and if the chief called you in, these fellas must be real bad.

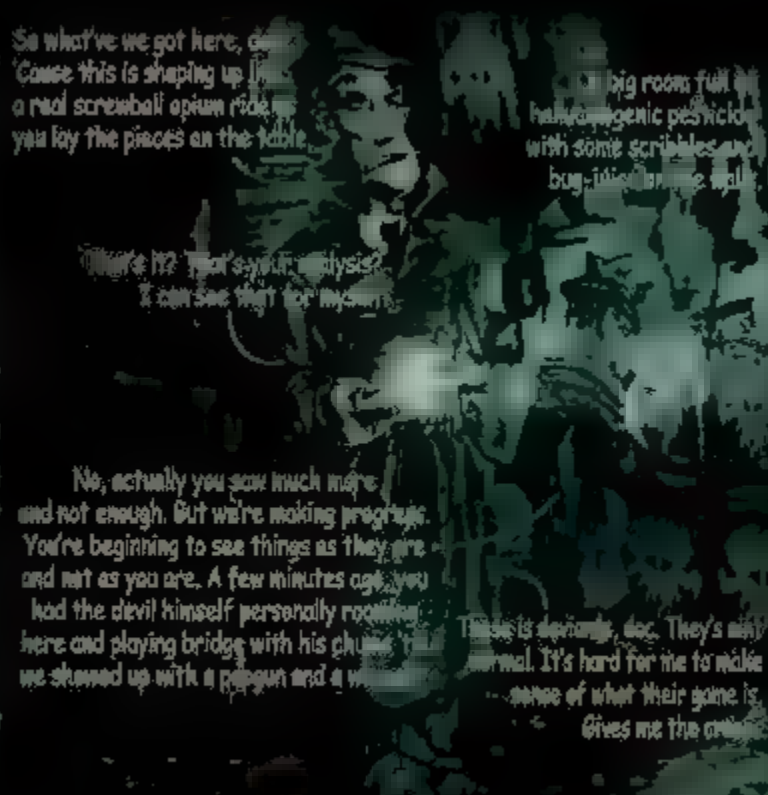
If you did less assuming and more detecting they might've pounded you.

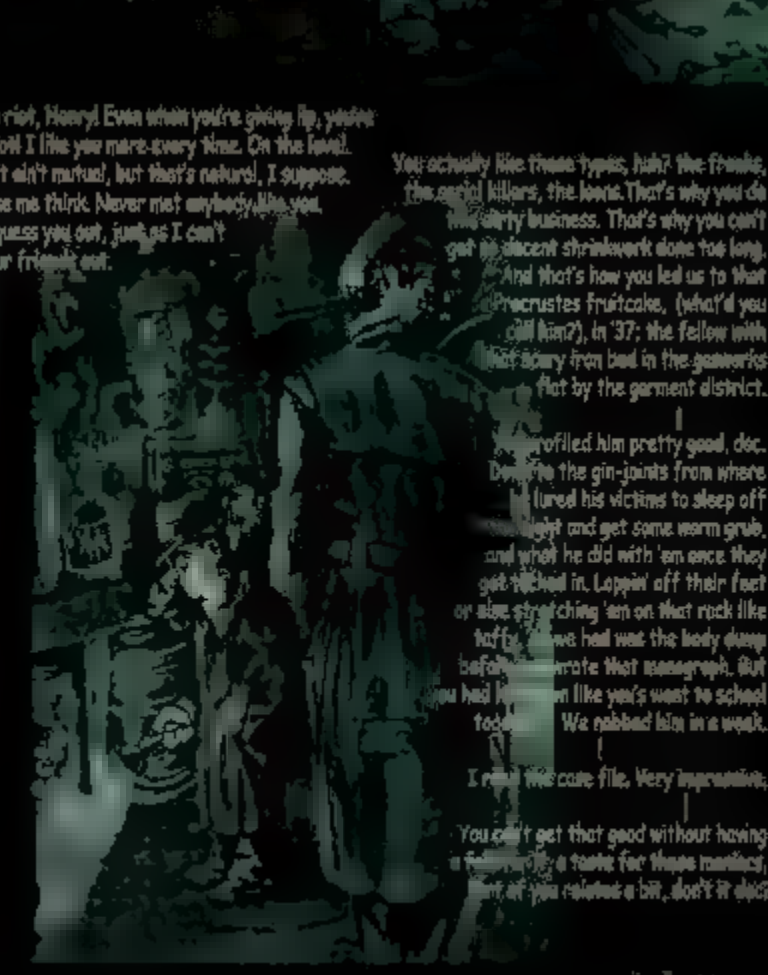
That's precisely what I shouldn't do. You're viewpoint's limited enough. Keep your headlights open and don't jump to conclusions. Don't learn from

I was right then! This is one of them nothing jobs. Seems with guns I understand, but

The devil has nothing to do with this, Thomas. Put the bean-shooter away. It makes me nervous. It's actually math, pretty high math, and some kinds of alphas. Our friends are so philistines. So try to see things clinically. A human hive like this city is an organism with many different cells. Inevitably, some of these cells will sicken or refuse to cooperate. Our job is simply to find where tumors exist and quarantine them as quickly as possible.
"There are more things 'twixt heaven and earth, Thomas, ...
You'd better leave the superstitious nursery stories out of this line. ...all we do here is connect the dots. Once you ... you close your case by ... your head.
"Ichor..."


Arthropod blood, not iron-based like chordates. This one's blue. Co... ed. Hemocyanin I'm guessing. Less efficient than iron for binding ... very, very useful as a marker for...
"There you go with your Greek again."
"They ... the ... industry ... find and ... endotoxins ... anyway ... extremely ...
"Sorry, I ... word?"





"Despite society's revealing new obsession with them, the serial killers interest me the least. They're usually the sad product of a misdirected talent. I find the subject rather dull, really. Distasteful. I suspect they'll be the de-facto fallback plot of every other new crime-novel and flick of the future. The natural successors, I suppose, to the popular gangster pulps of today; but much more private, more suited to the personal hells of modern man adrift in a world suddenly flayed open by science, but not soothed by it."

"As dismal as people generally are, I prefer them as complacent, cud-chewing, family-dinner-at-eight sort of animals. Uninspired but predictable. Following rules, making lines at the market, paying taxes. Boring, nice and boring. It's better that way, believe me.

"(Ok, brudda! Why'd I ask?)"

"The gods created humanity in a fit of misanthropy."

"Predators capitalise on that order. They move through society as jackals among sheep.

Opportunists, living by a whole other order that predates the gilded birdcage of modern civility.

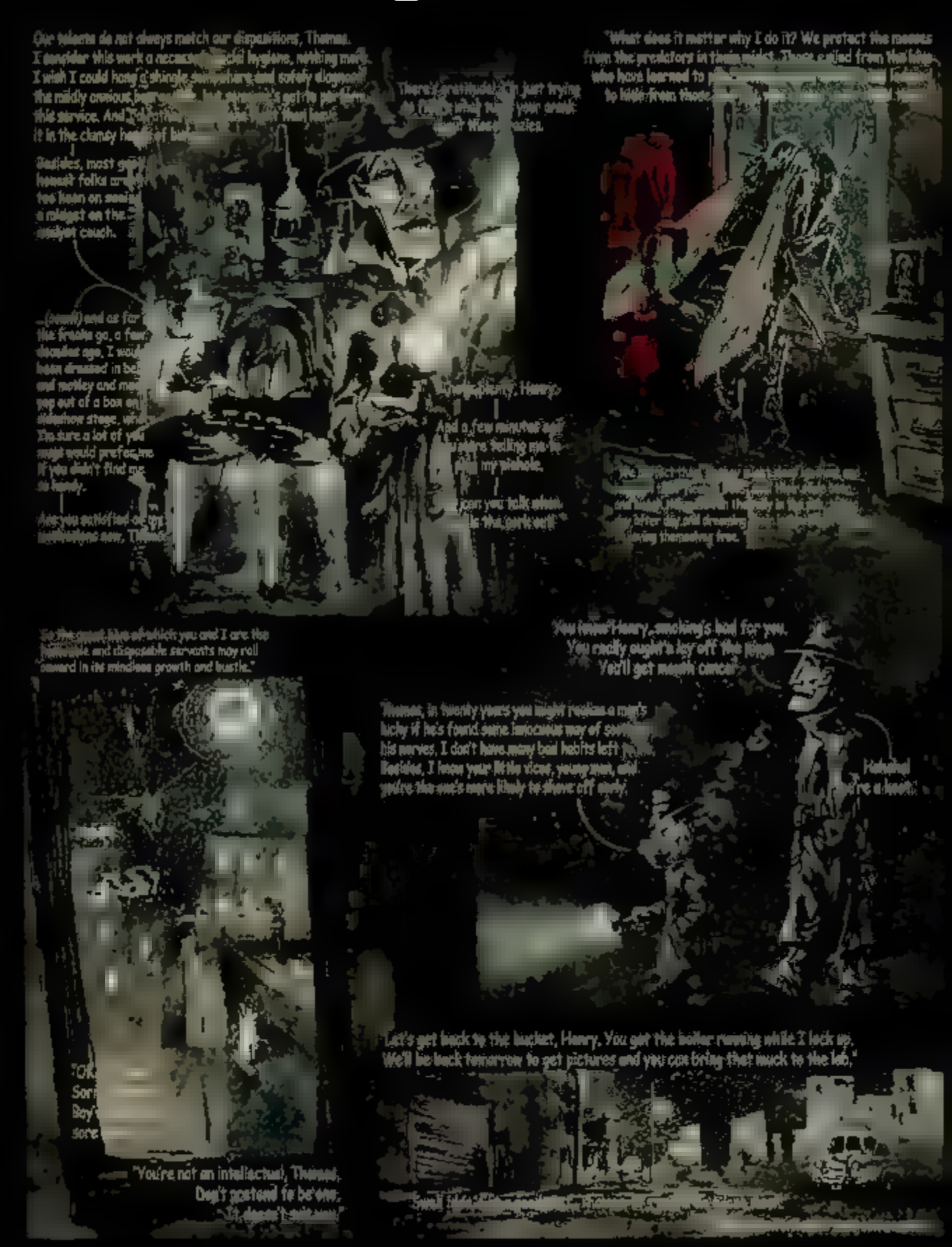
They would not exist in a more savage era, their appetites would not clamor so loudly for blood for the sport of it in daily life.

...terrible lovers with refined perversions.

"You're crackers, doc. You hates people, that's what. You're good at what you do, but I don't see why you do it. Plenty of good folks in this world."

...they would be carnivals and butchers, the cruder, organised, and commoner sort of killers who headed clans and tribes since primordial times. The fast torn apart by baboons."

...g to you, ...e cookie?"


Our talents do not always match our dispositions, Thomas.
I consider this work a necessary social hygiene, nothing more.
I wish I could hang a shingle, examine and safely diagnose
this service. And
it in the clammy
Besides, most
honest folks
two keen on
a midget on the
resident couch.
...(snort) and as for
this freaks go, a few
decades ago, I would
been dressed in bel
and monkey and me
pop out of a box on
Oklahoma stage, wh
I'm sure a lot of you
would prefer me
if you didn't find me
so handy.
Are you satisfied or do
There's gratitude for you. I'm just trying
Thank you, Henry.
And a few minutes ago
were telling me to
with my problems.
Can you talk while
"What does it matter why I do it? We protect the masses
from the predators in their midst. Those exiled from the tribe,
who have learned to
to learn from those
after day and dreaming
"In the current blue-shirt/tuxedo you and I are the
and disposable servants may roll
onward in its mindless growth and hustle."
"You know Henry, smoking's bad for you.
You really ought to lay off the stogs.
You'll get mouth cancer."
Thomas, in twenty years you might realize a man's
lucky if he's found some innocuous way of soo
his nerves. I don't have many bad habits left
Besides, I know your little vices, young man, and
you're the one's more likely to shave off early.
Hahaha!
You're a hoot.
Let's get back to the lucker, Henry. You get the boiler running while I lock up.
We'll be back tomorrow to get pictures and you can bring that muck to the lab."
"You're not an intellectual, Thomas.
Don't pretend to be one.
It doesn't suit you."

"Where is it?" he asked again. The Woman hadn't said anything comprehensible for the past five minutes, just a lot of crying, squeals and grunts. He looked over the printout, took a bite of his sandwich, and increased the voltage again. Drool had started running from between her clenched teeth and collecting at the sides of her mouth. Now a little was dripping from her shaking chin.

The pain was worse than childbirth, worse than when she was a teenage hooker and Eldorado Blue had tortured her with a red-hot wire hanger. She tried to think of something, anything that might hold her together, and through the torment she felt a force at the back of her brain. It gave her hope and held her steady, but she could not understand what it was. Eventually the agony retreated.

The Boss looked down at the last of the printouts. "I guess it wasn't you after all," he said with a slight smirk, and undid her shackles. The woman took a few moments to collect her wits and staggered from the seat. She had seen a dozen others burned to death there. Now she knew she would not be joining them.

"Let's get back to work on that letter," The Boss said casually. She shook a bit, took some deep breaths, and did as she was told. She went back to her desk to finish up the letter to the tax people, which The Boss had interrupted earlier.

Seeing her back at work, The Boss turned in his swivel chair and contemplated his next move. The sound of the woman typing was picking up speed. She was innocent, he was certain of that now. This left only two men on his list, his top exterminators. The Enforcer called Napoleon Red Caine, and the ace collector, Mac 10 Piano.

* * *

"What the hell are you talking about?" Napoleon Red screamed at the deskman on the hotel phone. "Who you letting come up here?" It was then that he heard heavy steps on the stairs outside the room. Instantly he surmised that the woman lying on the bed had betrayed him. Red remembered the gun he had left on the table behind him, but he figured that she must have unloaded it while he slept; Simone had always been smart.

The room door flew open and Red saw that Mac Piano was out front, moving with a confidence that assured Red he'd been set up. Mac stopped just inside the doorway and stood there sneering with lion-like pride. Four hired guns stood behind him. He had not even bothered to draw his weapon. "The man wants his money back," Mac said.

"Motherfucker," Red shouted, "It was you who took that stash out of his office, and you know it!" Simone had scampered up from the mattress and flattened herself against the wall

at the far side of the room. Her eyes darted back and forth between the two.

An odd moment of silence developed between the man at the door and the man by the bed. Nothing moved around them. Not the girl. Not the men outside. Napoleon Red and Mac Piano just stared at each other. Since they were boys growing up in the neighborhood, there had always been speculation about who was the hardest; all of their lives there had never been an excuse good enough to find out until now. Both men were shrewd, but Red had always been a little nastier, just a little more ruthless in dealing with the opposition. This had gotten him out of some close calls, and he knew it might just work for him now, if he was lucky. With one swift motion Red dropped and charged forward, seizing the stool beside the night table and swinging it like a mallet. The girl screamed as the stool cut through the air. Mac ducked left but Red had anticipated he'd go there. The heavy stool smashed straight into Mac's skull, and the big man fell like a hog at slaughter. His startled men instinctively drew back through the doorway. They had the guns, but they were cheap, jittery hired muscle, caught off guard by the sudden attack.

The girl lowered her hands from her eyes to see what was going on. Her mind registered Mac on the floor and Red standing over him. Red's icy face turned toward her and she couldn't look away from his gaze, even as he crossed the room, raising the stool as he moved toward her.

The blow shattered the girl's face. Blood and teeth speckled across the walls as her body somersaulted through the air and crashed down on its head. Before she had even hit the floor, Red had whirled around and smashed the overhead light with the stool.

The men outside saw the room plunged into darkness. One of them cursed in Spanish and began firing his pistol into the gloom. The others quickly joined in.

Red darted about in the flickers of berserk gunfire and finally came to cringe by the back wall as bullets tore into the cheap plaster all around him. The firing finally stopped, replaced by the sound of steel hammers clicking on empty chambers, then shaky hands fumbling for fresh clips.

Red heard their desperate voices. Someone wanted to go but someone wanted to stay. "Reload!" "Keep firing!" "Maybe we can still get paid," this guy was imploring the others.

Before the thugs could reach a consensus, Red snaked forward through the darkness and reached under the clothes he'd left in a bureau drawer.

The next man who spoke was brought down by a huge blade that spun out from the dark room and tore into his heart. One of the others shrieked and they all fled.

Red listened to the footsteps fade away. After it was quiet, he sat and watched the empty

doorway for a while. He figured that the deskman, for appearance sake, had probably called the cops. Later, he told himself, there would be plenty of time to sit comfortably in the dark, after his enemies were dead.

Red stood up and stepped over the dead girl and the smashed form of Mac. He yanked his blade from the chest of the body on the hall carpet, wiped the knife on the dead man's face, and climbed out a window onto a fire escape that took him down to the street.

No longer would he have to stay clear of Mac's territory. To celebrate, he decided he would, right then, walk over to Mac's home street, just a few blocks away, and kill a few of Mac's old friends.

But Napoleon Red Caine had forgotten the old days, when Mac 10 Piano had fought robots in the ring and earned the nickname "Iron Jaw."

Back in the hotel, Mac's hand began to twitch, then his blood stained eyes flickered open.

***

The Boss had grown up with Red and Mac. While they practiced at being tough, he had practiced at political manipulation. While they were learning to use Nines and Uzis, he was discovering Machiavelli. In the end they had, of course, come to work for him. Everybody had. The Boss sat at his desk, dictating the last of his letter to the tax people who had been bothering him. He reached for the remaining bit of sandwich as he thought about how he had always hated writing letters. He hated writing letters even more than he hated the tax people, and he thought about how he would kill all the tax people if he could just figure out how to get away with it. The phone interrupted his thoughts. It was his private line so he figured it could only be one person. Mac.

He snatched the receiver to his ear. "Well, what happened? Did you get him?" There was silence on the other end. "Well, what the fuck happened?" The Boss shouted into the silence.

"They missed me," said the cold voice at the other end.

"Humph," The Boss muttered, indifferent to hearing Red's voice instead of the one he expected. "So if he didn't get you, I hope you at least got him?" There was another moment of silence and then The Boss spoke again, "I would like this fucking dispute between you two cleared up one way or the other before any more time is wasted and any more of my money is stolen."

Red didn't answer right away.

The typing in the background was beginning to get on The Boss's nerves. He turned away from the phone and looked over at the woman.

The secretary, feeling his eyes on her, stopped typing and sat dead still, not looking up. The Boss said, "You can take the rest of the day off. Go out and have some fun baby." Then he turned back to the receiver and Red. "So?"

***

In the ruined hotel room, Mac stopped picking splinters from his face as he looked at the dead woman sprawled on the floor. He let out a terrible cry and swept her up in his arms. Tears streamed down his cheeks as he

ran his fingers through her hair and felt the jagged wet edges of her smashed skull. He remembered how he'd talked her into helping him, the words he'd spoken, things he'd never thought he'd really meant, "I love you baby. Go to Red. You get him relaxed. You tell him what he wants to hear. You do it for us. We'll get The Boss's money back, and he'll give me a big reward. Then we'll lay low for awhile, maybe the Caribbean or St. Thomas." Now she was dead and Red was still alive.

***

Red asked The Boss bluntly: "Did you OK the hit? "Do you think I was the one that took your bread?"

"I don't care who it was anymore," The Boss replied. "Maybe it was you, maybe it was Mac. Besides my secretary, you two were the only ones who had access to my codes. All that matters is that the sum was not so large as to cripple my organization by its sudden absence and yet, of course, not so small as to escape the notice of myself, my accountants, and some others who got lips. So now, for the purpose of appearance, the money got to come back and somebody got to leave this world in a discernibly high-profile and distasteful manner."

Red listened intently, understanding this was one of those rare instances where someone was telling him the positively straight dope.

"I've always given you boys everything you needed; nobody got any reason to be stealin' from me. There was only one thing I could never give nobody, the title Top Exterminator. That you have to decide between yourselves.

The Boss tugged at his crotch. "The one thing I can't afford is chaos and disorder. If I got to lose one good man to set it all back straight and narrow, so be it. Both of you knew that, so I figured one of you pulled this heist to set the other up, to justify a hit and become that top dog.

"Mac called me first, told me it was you, told me he'd bring me back what's mine. I gave him the OK. Now you callin' and I now extend the same to you, retroactive, even if you were the one who took the shit to begin with. You have always been the top exterminator in my army, better than Mac, in fact. So I'm glad you're the one who gets to live." The Boss hung up.

Red kept the phone to his ear for a moment, listening to the dead line. His eyes rolled slowly over the deserted street before him as his brain assessed the whole situation. In the end he decided he needed more guns.

***

Two police cars skidded to a stop in front of the hotel. The Sergeant was screaming over the radio: TAKE NO CHANCES! TAKE NO CHANCES!

They stormed into the hotel lobby. The desk clerk was pointing up the stairs and screaming, "N ggers! Niggers!"

The desk clerk's voice echoed up to the room where Mac was cradling Simone's body. He snapped back to reality as he registered hard steps coming up the hotel stairs. Mac dropped the girl's corpse, and unsheathed the sawed off shotgun from under his coat. He took two deep breaths, tore away the remnants of his bloody shirt and jacket, and charged out of the room, trampling the dead body

of his henchman in the hall. A line of cops was almost at the top of the stairs when Mac stormed overhead, firing down into them as he shrieked "LET'S ROLL, YOU MOTHERFUCKERS!!!"

Most of the cops were blown from the stairs by the ripping blast of dimes and nails. Mac would not let them stop him, he had to find Red and make him pay. He trampled through the rest of the screaming, crawling men, reloading as he went. He charged out the front of the hotel and cut loose on another cop car that was just pulling up. Eventually he fled up the street, leaving bloody footprints and a scattering of crying, maimed and broken figures behind him.

***

The Junkman stood at the edge of the lot, facing Red through the chain-link fence that bordered his property. A dog growled and barked at the newcomer until The Junkman silenced it with a wave of his hand. Red's clothes were stained with blood, but he appeared calm and ready for business. The Junkman pushed a button and the electric fence began to slide open.

"Something regular or something special?" said The Junkman.

"Very special," Red answered.

The Junkman turned and started back across the yard. Red followed as the fence slid closed behind them.

***

Mac's bloody shoe prints stopped at the phone booth where he was dialing The Boss's private line.

When the Boss heard Mac's voice on the other end he didn't sound surprised. He simply stated, "You have always been my best Exterminator, better than Red don't think he knows you are still alive. Find him first." Then The Boss hung up.

The meaning of The Boss's words was not lost on Mac as he stood holding the dead phone. The Boss knew that for the first time, Mac had missed his mark.

It was starting to rain. There was only one thing he could do now. He thought about where to look for his target.

***

On a table before Red and The Junkman was a fine selection of the street's most popular firepower. Red's eyes silently went from piece to piece, contemplating how each might serve him. He weighed the concept of how any number of the weapons could work in conjunction with one another, but he could find no calculation that assured certain victory.

The Junkman read the dissatisfaction on Red's face. His calm tone reflected the endless patience for which The Junkman was known. "What exactly did you come lookin' for?"

"Something REAL

special."

The Junkman rolled his eyes to the floor before his feet. He drew a long breath, let it out slowly, nodded his head toward Red and started to walk away. Red followed. The Junkman went out a door at the back of the room, through another room filled with weapons, and finally into another small room at the end of the subterranean railroad apartment. Red felt cold. Water was dripping in the darkness and echoing off the walls. The Junkman pulled a string and a naked light bulb flickered on from a wire overhead. On the floor were several suitcases. A black eagle claw, symbol of the ruthless security services that had been established after terrorist attacks on the nation, was stamped across the front of each.

"Oh shit!" Red muttered.

"Something REAL special," The Junkman replied.

***

At the edge of the city stood a grouping of cold buildings. A black eagle claw insignia was emblazoned on the flag that hung from each. In the bowels of one building, three uniformed men stood over another man who had been chained to a chair and beaten. Two of the uniformed men held heavy wooden clubs. The third man's hands were empty. He was The Captain and he did the talking.

"Where are my suitcases?" The man's calm tone did not hide his smoldering impatience.

"I-I don't know," the prisoner answered. The Captain motioned to the others and they immediately went to work on the prisoner with their clubs. He screamed under the beating and finally fell over, taking the chair to the floor with him. The merciless blows continued, smashing his hands, feet and ankles.

"PLEASE, PLEASE."

Tears rolled down the prisoner's cheeks.

The Captain motioned for them to stop and he leaned over the fallen man, edging closer and closer, until his lips were right up at the prisoner's ear. "WHERE ARE THE SUITCASES!" The Captain screamed.

The fallen man cried hysterically. One of the others kicked him in the throat after which he just whined and gasped for air. He could take no more, but part of his addled mind remembered how The Junkman had always been good to him. He did not want his last act to be the betrayal of a friend. His mind raced to think of another name they would believe, and having found it, he could only whisper as one of the men wrote it down.

and gave the paper to The Captain.

The Captain put the name in his pocket and nodded to the doctor who had been waiting patiently at the far side of the room.

The doctor uncapped a hypodermic needle and jabbed it into the prisoner's thigh. He screamed and began to shake His heartbeat doubled, tripled and stopped.

The others watched expressionlessly as the dying man clenched his fists, clinging to an invisible rope of faith.

***

Charlie, George and Carl had come on board for what they thought would be a simple hit. If they had known that the target, which Mac Piano had described as "an easy mark," was the notorious Napoleon Red Caine, none of them would have taken the job. They had remained ignorant of the target during the first meeting at Jimmie's Bar And Grill, where they had been hired, ignorant throughout the planning of the hit and ignorant throughout the execution of the job, where they had let an unarmed man escape their guns. So now they were gathered back at Jimmie's

Charlie took a nervous sip of beer and looked up at the others. "Let's just get the fuck out of town for awhile, huh?" George was even more nervous. "Would you guys just keep your fucking voices down!" he kept muttering.

Carl was trying to be tough about the whole thing "We should get paid!"

"Fuck that shit!" George started again, "Charlie's right, let's just get the fuck out!"

None of them had noticed a large figure enter the barroom from the door that connected to the alley out back

One by one the other patrons began to leave

***

Mac flattened himself in the shadows as a screaming police cruiser shot past Once satisfied that the cops were out of sight, he swung around the corner and headed up toward Jimmie's Bar Inside he knew he would find the three bungling shooters he had hired to back him up at the hotel. They were always in that dive The time he had spent on the job with them represented the only period he could remember seeing them outside of that place. The fucking bums. The first targets on his list were these loose ends

Mac stopped before the big tinted window in front of Jimmie's and considered his line of attack He thought about just going in shooting. The cops were probably after him for the hotel, so he figured he didn't really need to cover his tracks any more. He remembered the strange 9mm and matching clips that The Junkman had recently sold him. "Something real special" was how The Junkman described them "Something that delivers a mad punch when the same ole thing just won't do."

Mac pulled the gun from the back of his belt. The metal was odd and not quite like anything he'd felt before. A silent command came to his brain and without another thought he pulled forth a clip and shoved it into the weapon. It seemed to vibrate in Mac's hand, then came sudden, terrible pain, as hot metallic tentacles emerged from the handle and bored into Mac's flesh. He doubled

over and screamed. But then, with the connection made, the agony was gone and Mac stood up and shook for a moment, as if casting off a bad dream. A web of bloody metallic tendons now joined the weapon to his wrist and a voice spoke in his brain. "Kill your enemy. Kill your enemy. Kill them all. Kill them all." The words seemed irresistible to his soul. Suddenly the huge front window of Jimmie's bar shattered and a screaming figure hurdled through the glass and onto Mac. The impact knocked him back across the sidewalk, toward the gutter. The voice in his head screamed with fury: "KILL! KILL! KILL THE ENEMY."

Mac unloaded his gun into the figure that lay against him and then he got his foot under its wailing chin. It was Carl, one of the men he had hired to help him at the hotel. Mac pumped a shot through the man's face and his screaming stopped.

From over the jagged teeth of the bar's smashed window came the sounds of flesh and bone being pounded and pulverized. The dissipating smoke revealed Napoleon Red, covered in a symbiotic chain mail of wires and metallic muscles, holding before

him another of Mac's hired guns. Red smiled as he tightened his steel-claw vice grip and blood spurted from the other's nose and ears. The man let out a sickening gurgle, cut short by the cracking of bone.

Blood splattered down Red's arm as the man's torso fell away to the left while his head dropped off to the right.

Charlie, the last of the hoods, was cringing, unharmed, at the far side of the room. The terrified man suddenly gathered his nerve and bolted through a door behind the bar.

Red laughed after he heard the door slam. He'd never felt better in his life. The mechanisms of wire and steel that coursed through his body were worth every penny he had paid The Junkman, which was good, because that had been every penny he had had.

He stalked out of the bar and looked down at the twitching, smoldering, bullet-riddled body of Carl as it lay on the sidewalk in a widening pool of blood. He looked up and down the street. There was no sound, not even the distant whine of sirens, which he had come to expect from every day life. Suddenly he was distracted by a noise and he saw a figure pointing something at him from the darkness between two parked cars at the far side of the street. Steel coil reflexes sent him spiraling backward through the air, but Mac's quick-wit bullet changed course in mid-flight and tore away half of Red's face.

Teeth gritted, Mac

stared down the length of his smoldering gun. Red lay on the street before him, moaning, his face a bloody ruin. Mac leaned forward and took careful aim for the finishing shot, but Red's remaining eye suddenly focused and he rolled away with astounding speed as Mac squeezed the trigger. The screaming bullet missed its mark. It tore off a chunk of meat, but did not destroy any of Red's vitals.

Mac got off three more blasts. All missed. Nano-bots were now injecting Red with painkillers and a cocktail of amphetamines, firing his brain like an outboard motor. He staggered behind a streetlight then whirled back around, snarling, to confront Mac's gun.

For a long moment the two faced each other, the silence broken only by growling breathes. Mac snarled, "Boss wants his money back!" Red hissed through bullet smashed teeth, "Now you . die. motherfucker!" In an instant, Mac was blasting away as Red bounded across the space between them and buried his razor talons in Mac's chest. Mac kept firing. Chunks of flesh and bone flew across the air. They howled together, smoke obscuring the figures in their slam dance of screaming death.

***

The Boss turned in alarm as he heard someone outside the reinforced door of his inner office. Soon the hinges were being worked loose from the other side.

The door finally fell forward and a gang of uniformed men swarmed into the room. The Boss started to rise but he did not get to stand before an electric dart knocked him back into his chair. The once frightening figure seemed bewildered

and helpless as a multitude of black-gloved hands pulled him up by his hair and collar.

The Captain stood to the side while the others did the work. In his pocket was the paper with The Boss's name on it.

The Boss didn't start to fight until one of the uniformed men came toward him with an opened straight jacket. When they finally carried him out, he was a bound and gagged bloody mess, desperately kicking at the cruel figures all around him.

* * *

The Junkman pressed the switch and the electric gate, which separated him from The Boss's secretary, began to retract. He gave her a passionate kiss. In his arms she felt the quiet strength that always wiped away the dirty world. She buried her face in his chest and murmured, "I knew I would see you again."

"You're safe now, Yolanda", The Junkman said softly.

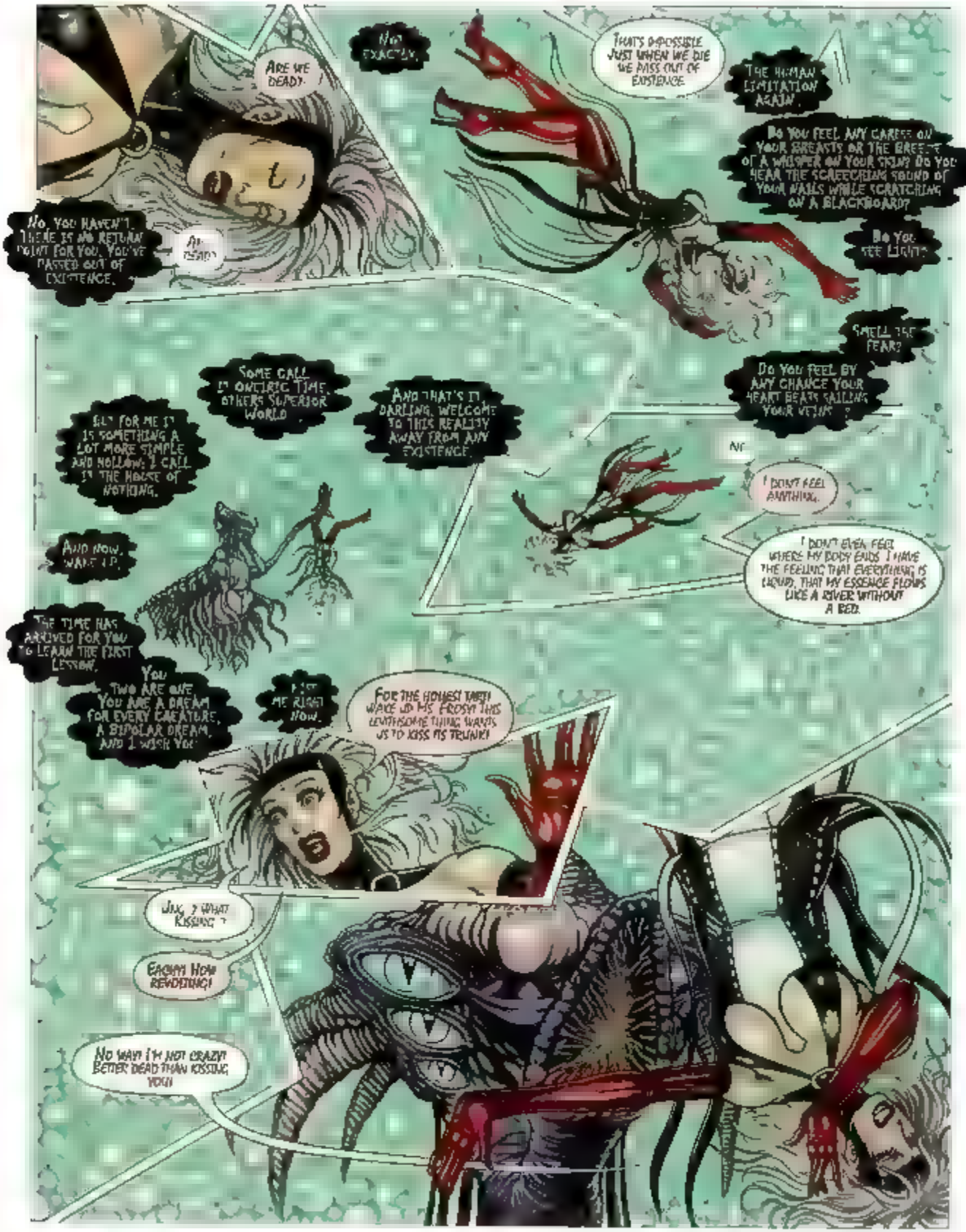
They held each other for a long moment, lost in the redemptive powers of human touch. Later, The Junkman and Yolanda went down into the chambers below The Junkman's buildings.

At a table at the back of his workshop, The Junkman removed a device from under the skin of Yolanda's right arm. This was what had allowed her to beat the lie detector in The Boss's shock chair.

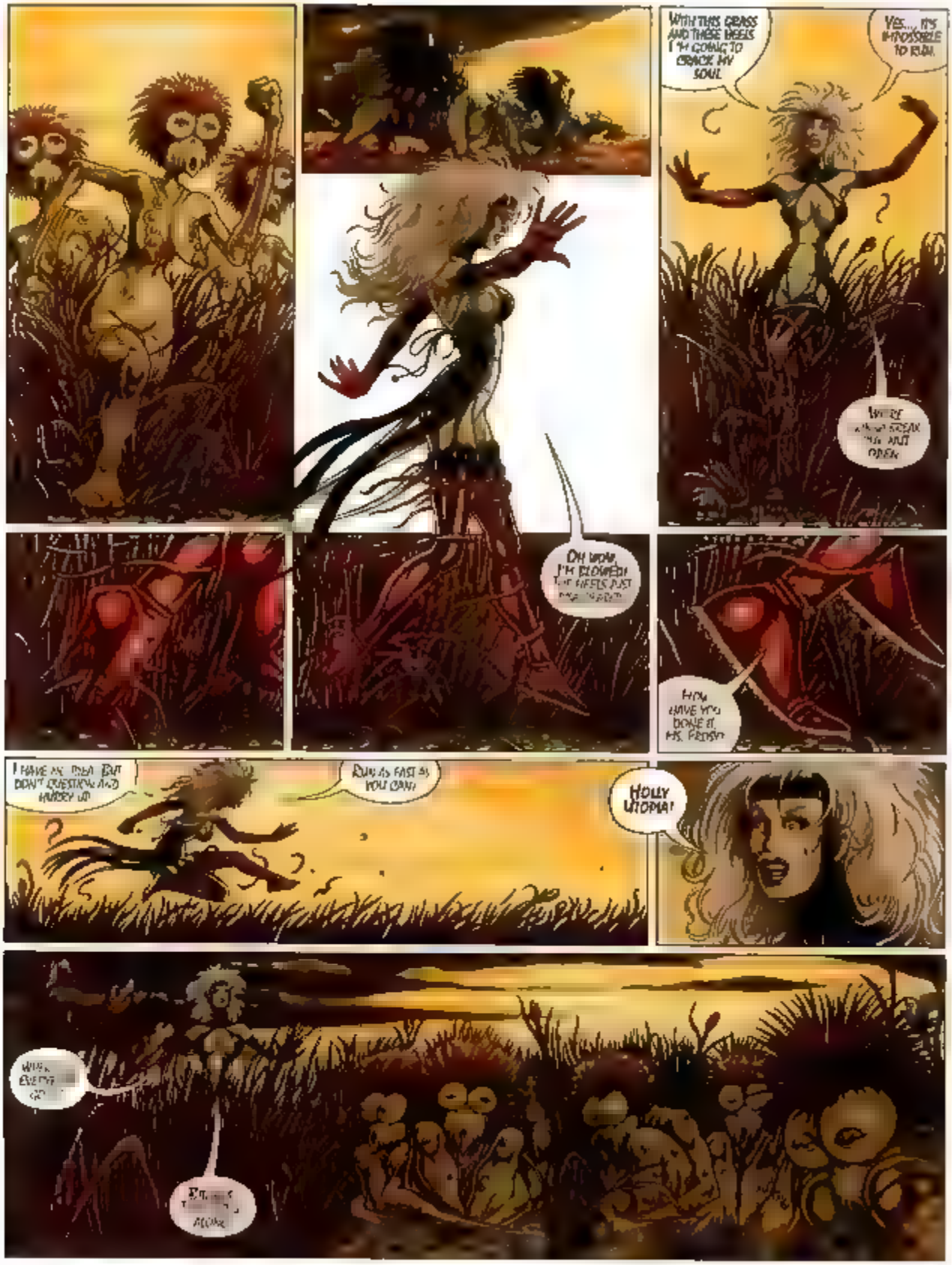
The couple went

back through more dark rooms to the most remote corner of the complex
The Junkman clicked on a light and pulled a small metal box from a secret place
The Secretary couldn't hold back tears as she watched The Junkman, on his knees before her, dividing up piles of The Boss' cash.

YOUR SOUL AND BODY BELONG TO ME IN ALL.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
WE ARE YOUR SLAVES?
NO, NOT EXACTLY. ALTHOUGH IT IS TRUE THAT I CAN MAKE USE OF YOU AS I WISH.
AMANDA IS RIGHT. IT SOUNDS LIKE SLAVERY TO ME.
THAT DOESN'T SURPRISE ME. YOUR HUMAN KNOWLEDGE IS VERY LIMITED.
AND WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ME?
YES, WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT US?
A LOT MORE THAN YOU BELIEVE.
AND, DADDY, DON'T BEAT ME MOMMY WAS THE ONE WHO COMPELLED ME TO DRESS LIKE THIS
DAMNED BRAT! ON TOP OF A WHORE, YOU ARE A LIAR.
DON'T WORRY, MAN. AMY IS THE BEST CHEERLEADER IN THE LEAGUE. SHE NEVER SAYS NO TO A PAL FROM THE TEAM.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND NOW? YOU ARE LIKE CLAY IN MY HANDS.
ALL RIGHT. I'M IMPRESSED. BUT IF YOU ARE NOT MY MASTER, WHO ARE YOU THEN? WHAT ARE YOU AFTER?
THAT'S RIGHT! WHAT DO YOU EXPECT TO GET FROM US?
WE CAN SAY THAT I AM YOUR TEACHER AND, IN OUR MUTUAL INTEREST, I OUGHT TO TEACH YOU A FEW SECRETS AND TRICKS OF YOUR NEW EXISTENCE.
ARE YOU PREPARED TO LEARN?
WHAT FOR?
I'M NOT A VERY GOOD STUDENT.
...TO BE BETTER THAN YOU EVER WERE BEFORE. IF YOU OBEY ME, I AM GOING TO TURN YOU BOTH INTO A GODDESS ABLE TO PLAY WITH THE DREAMS AND LIVES OF ALL HUMAN CREATURES.
ALL RIGHT. I'LL PLAY YOUR GAME. BUT JUST BECAUSE I HAVE NOTHING BETTER TO DO.
WE HAVE NO CHOICE, RIGHT?


ARE WE DEAD?
NO, YOU HAVEN'T. THERE IS NO RETURN FLIGHT FOR YOU. YOU'VE PASSED OUT OF EXISTENCE.
AH, DEAD!
NO, EXACTLY.
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE. JUST WHEN WE DIE WE PASS OUT OF EXISTENCE.
THE HUMAN LIMITATION AGAIN.
DO YOU FEEL ANY CARESS ON YOUR BREASTS OR THE BREEZE OF A WHISPER ON YOUR SKIN? DO YOU HEAR THE SCREECHING SOUND OF YOUR NAILS WHILE SCRATCHING ON A BLACKBOARD?
DO YOU SEE LIGHT?
SMELL THE FEAR?
DO YOU FEEL BY ANY CHANCE YOUR HEART BEATS FAILING YOUR VEINS?
NO
I DON'T FEEL ANYTHING.
I DON'T EVEN FEEL WHERE MY BODY ENDS. I HAVE THE FEELING THAT EVERYTHING IS LIQUID. THAT MY ESSENCE FLOWS LIKE A RIVER WITHOUT A BED.
SOME CALL IT ONEIRIC TIME, OTHERS SUPERIOR WORLD.
AND THAT'S IT, DARLING. WELCOME TO THIS REALITY AWAY FROM ANY EXISTENCE.
SO FOR ME IT IS SOMETHING A LOT MORE SIMPLE AND HOLLOW. I CALL IT THE HOUSE OF NOTHING.
AND NOW, WAKE UP.
THE TIME HAS ARRIVED FOR YOU TO LEARN THE FIRST LESSON.
YOU TWO ARE ONE. YOU ARE A DREAM FOR EVERY CREATURE, A BIPOLAR DREAM. AND I WISH YOU
KISS ME RIGHT NOW.
FOR THE HONEST TRUTH I WAKE UP HIS FROSTY THIS LEVITHSOME THING WANTS US TO KISS ITS TRUNK!
UH, ? WHAT KISSING ?
EACHH! HOW REVOLTING!
NO WAY! I'M NOT CRAZY! BETTER DEAD THAN KISSING YOU!

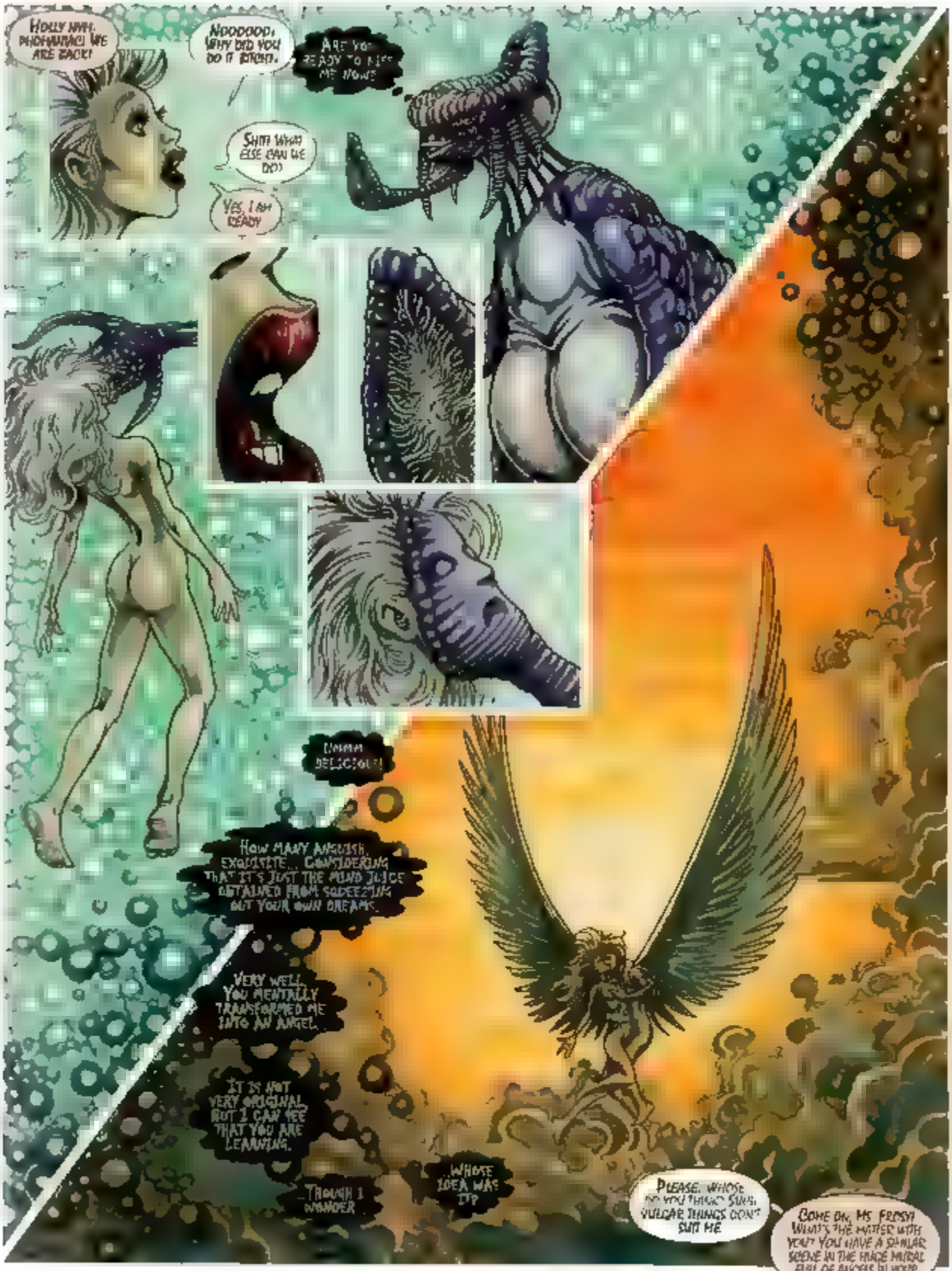
ALL RIGHT DREAMY, MY DARLING, WISH FULFILLED
IF YOU DON'T WANT TO ASK ME, THEN START RUNNING.
WHAT THE
WHERE ARE WE?
WHAT WE'LL DO WE WRESTLE WITH THE CHAMPS!
OH, WE'D BETTER RUN, RUN!
BUT WHY DO WE RUN WHAT DO THESE DISGUISED GUYS WANT FROM US?
I DON'T KNOW, BUT I'M NOT GOING TO STOP TO ASK THEM!


WITH THIS GRASS AND THESE HEELS I'M GOING TO CRACK MY SOUL
YES... IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO RUN.
OH WOW! I'M BLOWED! THE HEELS JUST
HOW HAVE YOU DONE IT, MS. FROST?
I HAVE NO IDEA BUT DON'T QUESTION AND HURRY UP
RUN AS FAST AS YOU CAN!
HOLLY UTOPIA!

AEAGH!
OH! WOW, MS. FROSH WHERE DID YOU GET THE SWORD FROM?
I DON'T KNOW I THOUGHT OF IT APPEARED FROM NOWHERE
WELL, COME, COME NOW, YOU DAMNED EUNUCHS
COME NOW IF YOU DARE!!
UH...!!

WHERE THE HECK ARE WE NOW
OUCH! I BELIEVE SOMEBODY
BASHED US FROM BEHIND, YES BUT
WHERE THE HECK ARE WE?
I DON'T KNOW. I WON'T HOPE. DAMN IT! WE ALWAYS END UP THE SAME WAY
UNGH
I REALIZED THAT ON MY OWN, AND I DON'T LIKE IT
WHAT WHAT'S GOING ON?
I DON'T KNOW. THIS SLIMY MATTER THAT CREEPS ALL OVER OUR BODY IMMOBILIZES US, AND I DIDN'T LIKE A BIT WHAT I'VE SEEN WHILE TAKING A CLOSER LOOK
WHERE TO LEFT OR RIGHT?
TO THE LEFT
YOU ARE NOT AN ACCEPTABLE FEMALE. YOUR PHYSIOLOGY IS QUITE WEIRD TO ME
TELL ME AGAIN, HOW DO YOU SPEAK THROUGH?
WHICH ONE DO YOU WANT ME TO SPEAK THROUGH?
THROUGH MY MOUTH.
WHAT ELSE DO YOU EXPECT?
BUT STEP AHEAD, PAL. I CAN'T SEE YOU.
WOW! WHAT A STRAPPING LAD! WHAT A DREAM BOY! HE IS PERFECT! HOT HOT HOT
HOLLY NYMPHOMANIAC! WHOEVER HE IS, HE SURE IS NO EUNUCH! I'D NEVER SEEN A TOOL LIKE THIS IN MY WHOLE LIFE
OF COURSE
I LIKED IT BECAUSE OF YOUR TONE OF VOICE BUT I WANTED TO BE SURE
SO, IF YOU SPEAK THROUGH YOUR HIGHER MOUTH, YOU MUST BE FERTILIZED THROUGH THE LOWER ONE. GOD DESIGN, CERTAINLY. WHAT KIND OF MIND WOULD PLACE A REPRODUCTIVE HOLE CLOSE TO AN EXCRETORY ONE

WHO ARE YOU, DREAMY BOY? MY NAME'S FROSHEART BUT MY LOVERS CALL ME FROSY
I AM A GIGER FEMALE I AM THE GIGER 69 BUT WHO I AM IS UNDERSTANDABLE MY OBJECTIVE IN LIFE IS WHAT REALLY MATTERS
ALL RIGHT AND WHICH ONE IS YOUR VITAL OBJECTIVE MY DEAR?
I [illegible] EXTERMINATOR
OH SHIT
OH. YES, YES, AMY DARLING, DON'T BE RETICENT! I WANT TO FEEL THIS TITAN BETWEEN MY LEGS
PLEASE DO NOT OPPOSE MY WILLING, AMANDA HE IS SO BEAUTIFUL SO VIRILE I NEVER HAD SUCH A PERFECT [illegible]
NO BU[illegible] YOU SEE IT'S A SHAM! LOOK AT HIS REFLECTION IN THE LEFT DOME THE DARK ONE OF STONE OR [illegible]
BUT WHAT DO YOU MEAN? DON'T BE CRUEL ALREADY LOOKED THERE AND ALL I SEE IS MY SCULPTURAL BODY READY TO BE POSSESSED BY THIS [illegible] BEAUTY THE SHOW I'VE ALWAYS BEEN EAGER TO WATCH
NO YOU ARE CRAZY YOU MUST RESIST YES, FROSY, PLEASE WAKE UP IT IS HORRIFYING NAUSEATING THAT THING IS CONTROLLING YOUR MIND!!
NO NO
NOOOOOOOO!


HOLLY SHIT, PHOTHURAC! WE ARE BACK!
NOOOOOO! WHY DID YOU DO IT AGAIN?
ARE YOU READY TO KISS ME NOW?
SHIT! WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?
YES, I AM READY
MMMM DELICIOUS!
HOW MANY ANGUISH, EXQUISITE... CONSIDERING THAT IT'S JUST THE MOLD JUICE OBTAINED FROM SQUEEZING OUT YOUR OWN DREAMS.
VERY WELL. YOU MENTALLY TRANSFORMED ME INTO AN ANGEL.
IT IS NOT VERY ORIGINAL, BUT I CAN SEE THAT YOU ARE LEARNING.
...THOUGH I WONDER
...WHOSE IDEA WAS IT?
PLEASE. WHOSE DO YOU THINK SUCH VULGAR THINGS DON'T SUIT ME
COME ON, MS FRESH! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU? YOU HAVE A SIMILAR SCENE IN THE HUGE MURAL FULL OF ANGELS IN YOUR OFFICE.

ATOMIC MADHOUSE

RETRO COMIC BOOK SOUND EFFECTS T SHIRTS

EXPRESS YOUR RAGE!!

ARG
RED ON BLACK
FITTED TEE

ARG
GREEN ON BLACK
FITTED TEE

ARG
CREME ON BLACK
FITTED TEE

TOXIC
ON BLACK
REGULAR TEE

MORE STYLES FOR THE LADIES..

BLAMM!
CREME ON OLIVE
FITTED TEE

BLAMM!
CREME ON BLACK
FITTED TEE

DEVIL GIRL
SPAGHETTI TOP

ARG CREME ON BLACK
SEXY FITTED TEE

BLAMM!
BLACK ON OLIVE
FITTED TEE

KPOWW!
CREME ON BLACK
REGULAR TEE

ARG CREME ON BLACK
SPAGHETTI TOP

BLAMM! CREME ON BLACK
SPAGHETTI TOP

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ARG	REME ON BLACK S M L XL 2XL	$14.95
BLAMM	REME ON OLIVE S M L XL 2XL	$14.95
BLAMM	BLACK ON OLIVE S M L XL	$14.95
BLAMM	RED ON BLACK S M L X 2X	$14.95
KPOWW	CREME ON BLACK S M L XL 2XL	$14.95
TOXIC	S M XL 2XL 3XL	$14.95
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W BLAMM	CREME ON BLK SPAG S M L XL 2XL	$15.95

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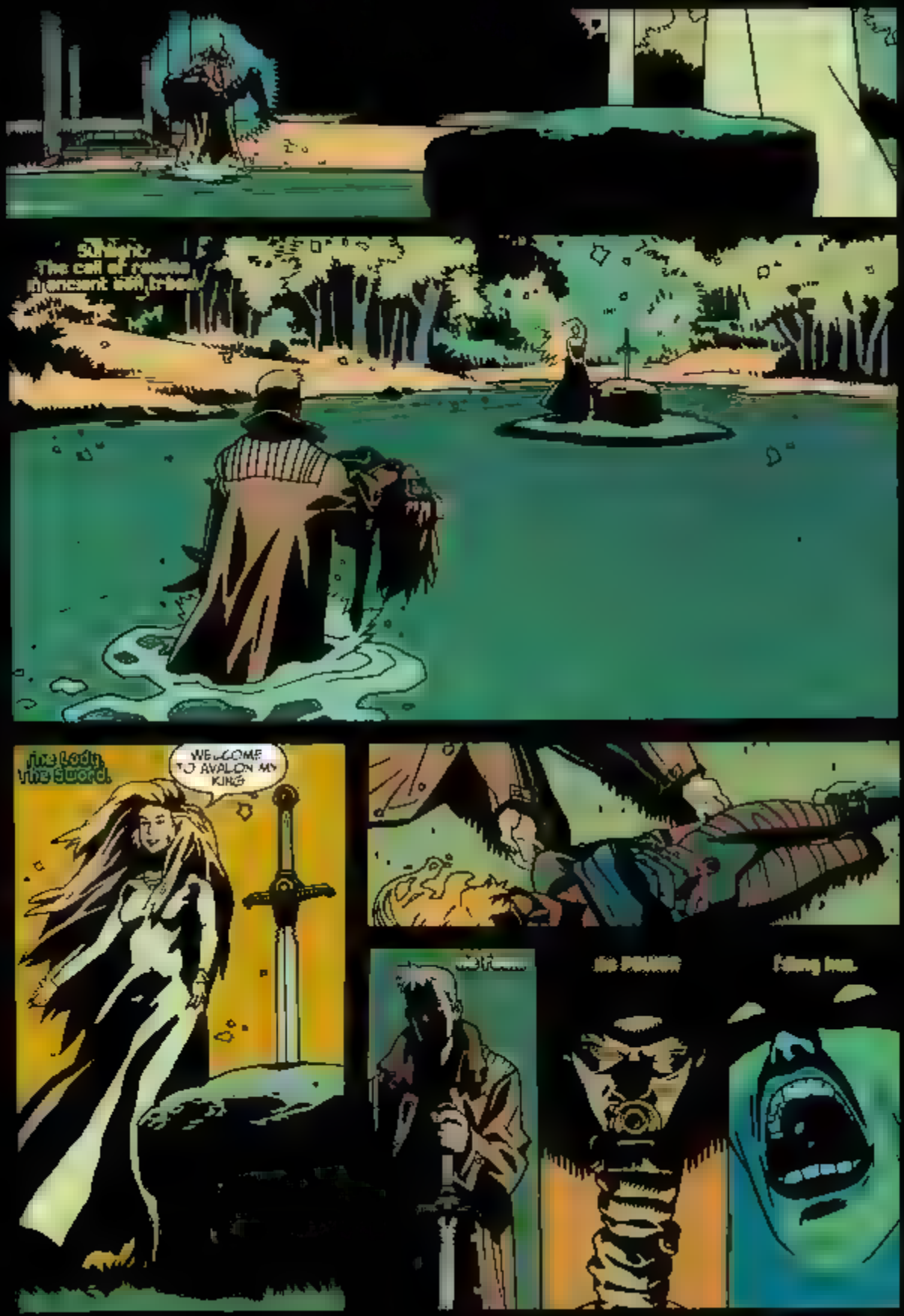
I certify that all information furnished on this page is true and complete.

Howard Jurofsky
Vice President

24-HOUR MAN CONTINUED FROM PAGE 40

WE GO NO FURTHER. ONLY THE KNIGHT OF SWORDS MAY ENTER THE TOWER.
THE WAY IS DIFFICULT.
CREEEEEK
It is huge. A vast sullen emptiness. The smell of old stone and ancient incense lingers in the air.
TOK TOK TOK

THE TOWER HAS MANY LEVELS AND REALITIES. LIKE THE SWORD, LIKE GENICE ITSELF. YOU CAN GET LOST AND WANDER FOR AN ETERNITY AND NEVER FIND THE PATH OUT.
USE YOUR INNER
SEE BEYOND


WELCOME TO AVALON MY KING

SKRUUK
MUSIC, SWEET MUSIC. WISH I COULD CARESS AND KISS. KISS
THANKS AND PRAISE TO JAH THE MOST HIGH OUR KING HAV CLAIMED THE

...AND GENERAL PREPARE THE ARMY WE MOVE IN THIRTY MINUTES
AMEN, AMBEL
REMEMBER WHAT THE ANCIENT BOOK SAYS "THE HANDS OF THE KING ARE THE HANDS OF A HEALER"
HHRRRRMMMMMMMMMMMMMM
Energy leaves him, flows gently into his lover.

"Cry for all"
"Together they rise up."

HAVE THE GODS INDEED YOU ARE THE KING THE CITY SAVIOUR!
AND THE WIND BEGAN TO HOWL
NNNNNN
BRAAP BRAAP BRAAP BRAAP
1
2
MAROSH'S GONNA FUR BROKE NOT GOOD ODDS
I DON'T SEE WHERE WE'VE GOT MUCH CHOICE

WE WIN OR DIE!

HUUAAAHH!
BA-BOOOM
SKRAASH
CRYSTAL! ON YOUR LEFT!
BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA
KRRRRR

KRRR

JO NAH!
VRP VRP THUD VRP VRP
I'M FINE!
A MINOR INJURY WE HAVE A BIGGER PROBLEM
HISSSS
TOK
TOK
CHIK
THERE'S TOO MANY OF THEM
BETTER TO DIE ON YOUR FEET

KA-BOOM
El Torro!
FOR VENICE!
BRAK
BRAK
BRAK
BRAK
BRAK
BOOM
WOOOSH

BOOOM
WE HAVE TO SAVE WHAT WE CAN, LIEUTENANT PREPARE TWO TRANSPORT COPTERS FOR IMMEDIATE EVAC!
I'M STILL IN INMAN'S HEAD AND I SAY WE TAKE HIM NOW!
RIPPLE! OLD FOOL INMAN'S NOT HIM... BUT WHO ARE YOU HERE
BRRR

ONE WE MADE JURSELVES TOGETHER!
DRN DRN DRN DRN DRN DRN DRN DRN DRN
WHUMP

"REMEMBER, THE SERPENT'S TONGUE IS ITS MOST DEADLY WEAPON."
DRN DRN DRN DRN DRN DRN DRN DRN
HELLO NEWSPAPER MAN. GOING TO FIGHT ME AGAIN? FOOL! MY MASTERS ARE OLDER THAN THIS WORLD AND FAR MORE POWERFUL THAN THOSE SERVED BY YOU AND THAT DODDERING HEDGE WIZARD
DO THINK THE FLASH DANCE WAS AN ACCIDENT? WE PLANNED TO PREPARE THIS WORLD. TO TWIST IT FOR THE MASTERS RETURN

YES, I KNOW WHAT YOU REALLY WANT IT'S POWER, ISN'T IT NEWSPAPER MAN. I CAN GIVE YOU THAT POWER
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
GIVE UP THE SWORD AND JOIN US. SERVE MY MASTERS AS MY RIGHT HAND VENICE CAN STILL BE YOURS
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
SCREW YOUR OFFER AND SCREW YOUR "MASTERS" YOU WANT THE SWORD? TRY TO TAKE IT
THUD
THUD
THUD
THU

back and forth
RING OF MAN FEEL MY POWER
KA-TOOM
DIE!
WHSSSHHH

For Crystal!
NO!
CHOK
RUAAAGH!

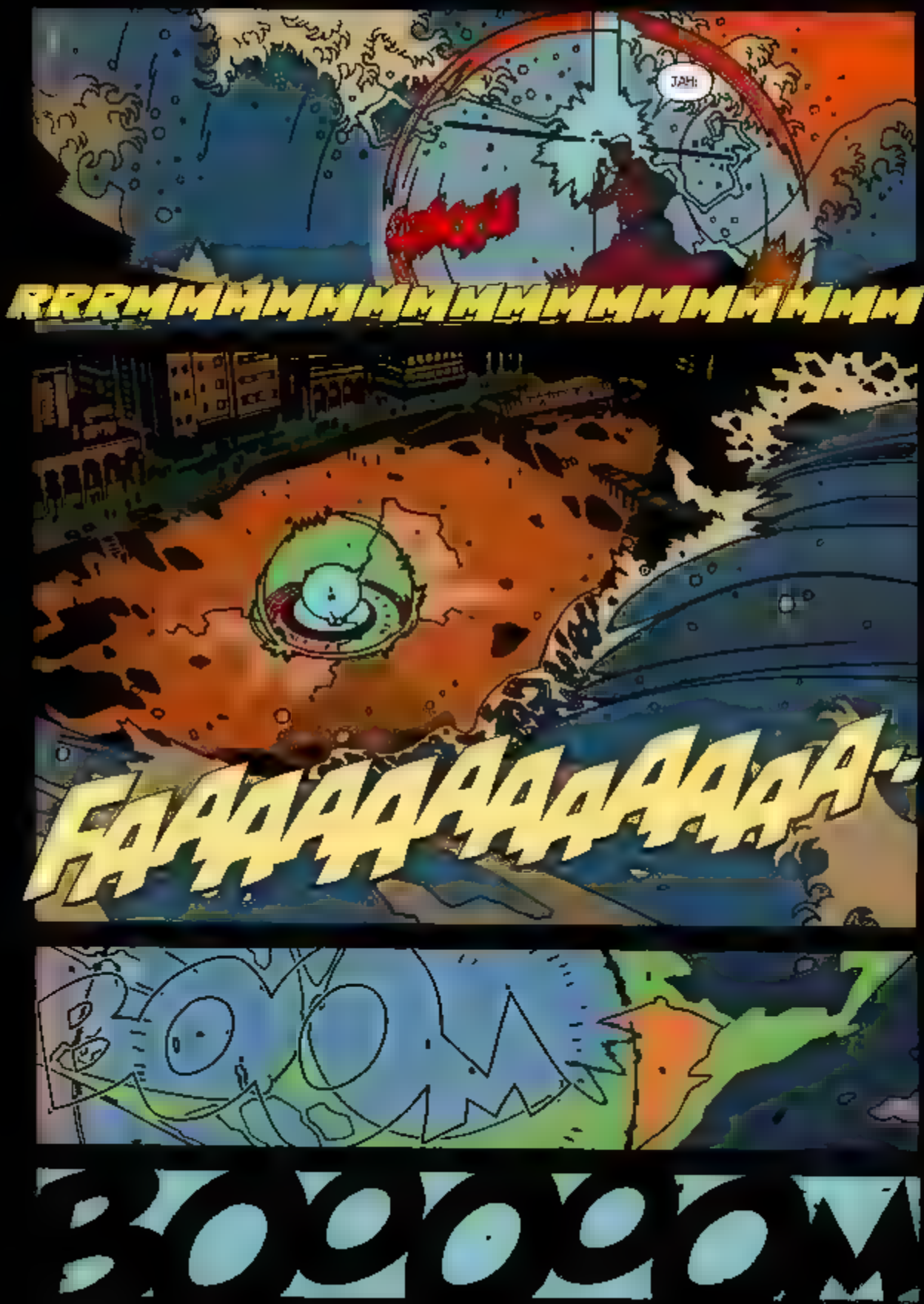
CHUK
BA-BOOOM

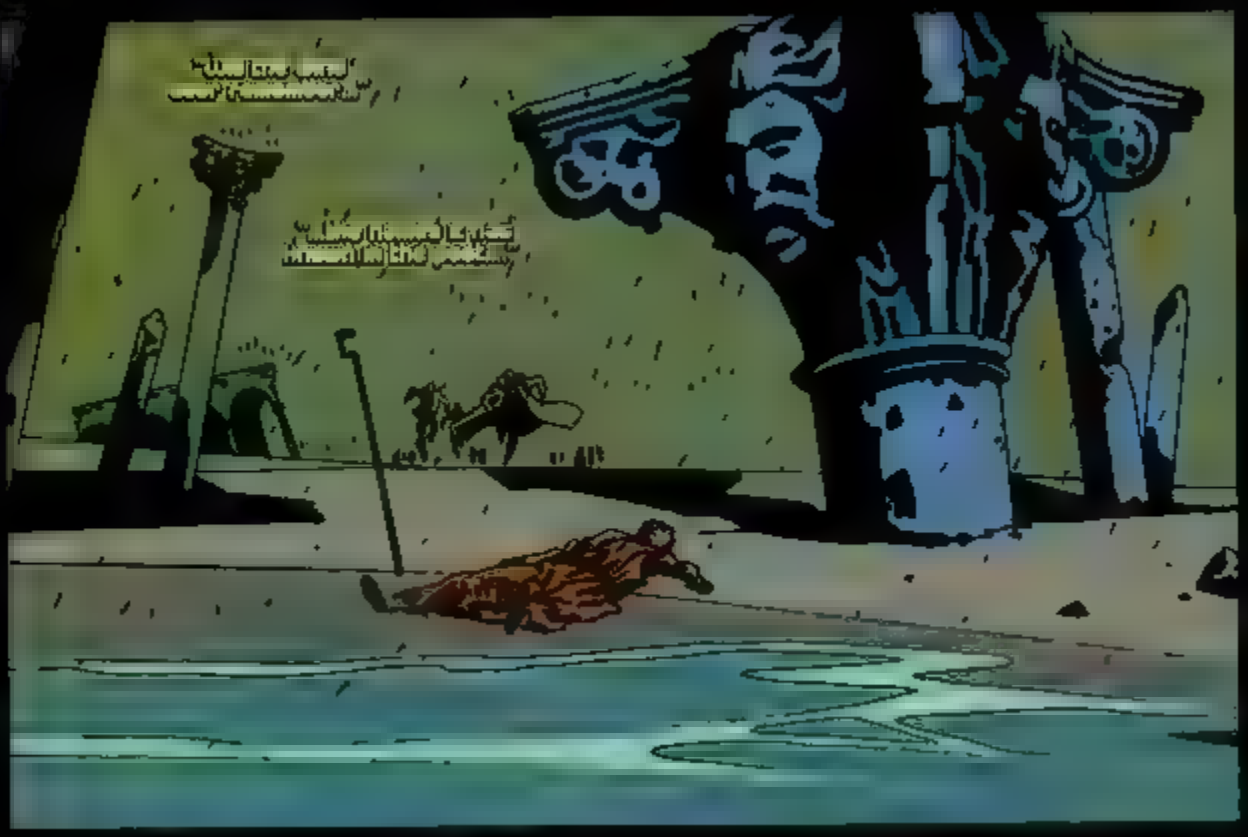
HUH?
I'M NOT SURE
"...fell in the sea..."
"...actually"
TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC
BEEEEEEEEEP

FUSION!
IT'S GOING TO HIT THE CITY IN LESS THAN A MINUTE
WE ARE ALL DEAD

WITH THIS HELP I SHALL STOP IT
YUMP!
BUUUUURRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR
GIVE YOUR SERVANT STRENGTH
RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR

RRRRMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM
REVEAL UNTO ME


JAH!
RRRMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM
FAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
BOOOOOM



JO-NAH, YOU DID IT YOU SAVED THE CITY
AARON WE DID AS HE PROPHESIZED

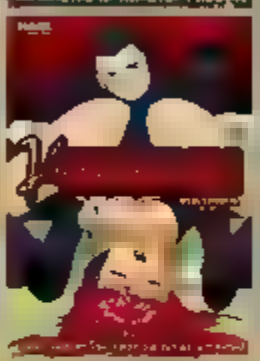
FOR THE GONDOLIER

"And the wind cries Mary."
I KNEW HIM FOR ONLY A DAY BUT I FEEL LIKE I'VE LOST MY FATHER
HE GAVE HIS LIFE FOR US FOR OUR CITY
I DON UNDERSTAND
HE SAID
TO-NAH DID NOT DIE ALONE MANY PEOPLE GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR THE CITY WE CAME BECAUSE YOU CALLED US

I CAN DO THIS
YOU CAN AARON I BELIEVE IN YOU WE ALL DO
PEOPLE OF VENICE MY PEOPLE TODAY, MANY GAVE THEIR LIVES SO THAT WE COULD LIVE FREE SO THAT THIS CITY, OUR CITY COULD LIVE FREE, YOU WANT ME TO BE YOUR LEADER, YOUR KING I CAN'T DO THIS ALONE
YOU HAVE TO SUPPORT ME YOU HAVE TO SUPPORT THE CITY TOGETHER WE CAN DO THIS TOGETHER WE CAN REBUILD OUR CITY TOGETHER WE CAN SAFE-GUARD THE SPIRIT OF VENICE
MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS, I PLEDGE MYSELF TO YOU, TO THE CITY WILL YOU PLEDGE YOURSELVES TO ME? TO OUR CITY? TO EACH OTHER?

A new people,
a new country is born
from a savage labor.

24 Hours after it began.



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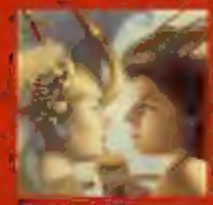

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